SEPTEMBER 2013 SEPTEMBER 2013 SEPTEMBER 2013

YOUR NEW GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING



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Director Justin Tagg guides us through the complex plot of his guirky new short



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It's pretty amazing what you can do with the minimum of kit if you're a filmmaker on a budget. As we notch up another issue, we're still getting plenty of people coming forward to tell their own filmmaking story and, in many cases, the money and kit involved is minimal. Considering just how frugal many filmmakers are, often through necessity, the results we see are hugely impressive.

Pick through the selection of features we've assembled this issue and you'll see an incredibly inspiring array of work, ranging from web TV series through to full-blown features. Saying that, while you're certainly an inventive and resourceful lot out there, we've found that our Ask the Producer feature has been a very popular addition. So Jonathan Sothcott is back again this month to tackle more of your queries relating to all areas of production. Elsewhere, we've got another slew of practical insights into the world of filmmaking.

We've also been toying with setting up a monthly filmmaking challenge, but want to know what you think first. Drop us a line over on the Facebook page if you're interested and we'll hopefully have something concrete nailed down soon. We're also ramping up our social media efforts too, with a dedicated person now handling the Twitter account. Keep an eye on it as he's a bona fide movie insider with plenty to say.



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Digital FilmMaker

SEPTEMBER 2013

The lowdown on latest developments from the world of digital video



Canon has unveiled the latest addition to its prestigious EOS range of DSLRs: the 70D. Aimed at budding enthusiasts, the EOS 70D is designed to help creative photographers and videographers take their image capture to the next level by combining brand new, pioneering Canon imaging technology with powerful wireless sharing features.

The 70D features a newly developed 20.2-megapixel APS-C CMOS sensor, designed and manufactured by Canon. The first DSLR in the world to feature innovative new Dual Pixel CMOS AF technology, the camera promises to deliver smooth, fast and precise AF acquisition when shooting Full HD movies and when operating in Live View mode. The 70D's

latest-generation 14-bit DIGIC 5+ processor and 19-point all crosstype AF System combine to provide the facility to capture full resolution images at an impressive rate of up to 7fps for up to 65 JPEG or 16 RAW images in a single burst. A wideranging array of user-selectable sensitivities - spanning ISO 100-12800 - also hints at the versatility when it comes to low-light shooting.

"I was incredibly impressed with how many new technologies the EOS 70D packs into one body, and how versatile it is," said Brutus Östling, Canon Ambassador. "The EOS 70D is the perfect camera for anyone that wants to develop their photography skills. Not only is it suited to shooting people, landscapes and action easily and in outstanding quality, but also filming subjects in Full HD

with focus speeds I never thought would be possible. The camera proved itself in the most challenging of circumstances, and had a range of new-generation technologies to comfortably solve any test I threw at it - especially with the new Dual Pixel CMOS AF technology. It really takes DSLR shooting and filmmaking to a whole new level."

The brand new Dual Pixel CMOS AF is designed to make the process of capturing stunningly detailed movies simple, with moving subjects in sharp focus and the opportunity to create professionallooking pull-focus effects. The technology is based on advanced CMOS architecture, allowing two photodiodes to be mounted within each pixel, both of which can be read independently to achieve autofocus, or simultaneously for image capture. This retains maximum image quality at all times.



The user-customisable AF system for stills features 19 cross-type AF points spread across the frame, providing high-speed, accurate AF that's ideal for tracking moving sports and wildlife subjects. AF points can be isolated individually. used together in small groups or as a wide active area for more unpredictable subjects.

The 70D offers an Intelligent

Viewfinder with 98% frame coverage, with framing guides and camera settings clearly visible via the electronic overlay. A 3" Variangle Clear View LCD II touchscreen with a 1,040k dot resolution is also on hand for easy framing and recording in Live View and Full HD movie modes. The capacitive screen also supports gestures, such as swiping and pinch-zooming, which helps to make the processing of accessing menus and altering settings more intuitive.

The 70D is also the latest EOS model to come with integrated Wi-Fi, offering users the flexibility to connect to the EOS Remote app and control a wide range of settings, focus and release the shutter from a distance. Remote Live View mode also allows for remote image review.

Full HD (1920 x 1080p) video can be captured with a choice of selectable frame rates, including 30, 25 or 24fps, and 60 and 50fps at 720p, and a range of compression options for post-editing and sharing. The new Dual Pixel CMOS AF, Movie Servo AF mode tracks subjects as they move, or as shots are recomposed, ensuring they're always in focus. Users can also select different focus areas over 80% of the frame by tapping the touchscreen when recording. Videographers also benefit from stereo sound recording using the built-in microphone, or attach an external microphone for enhanced sound quality. Full control over settings, such as aperture and ISO, is also possible within manual mode, giving users greater freedom as their skills advance.

The Canon 70D is set to go on sale at the end of August and will be priced at £1,079.99 body only. Check out the full specifications at www.canon.co.uk



RØDE Microphones has announced its acquisition of the acclaimed FiRe audio recording application for Apple iOS devices, from leading US based developer, Audiofile Engineering. With Audiofile's long-standing reputation for superior audio software development across all iOS platforms, RØDE's latest purchase puts the company at the forefront of global iOS audio recording innovation.

The terms of the new agreement sees RØDE taking full ownership of the app, along with its fundamental code, in order to allow for further refinement and growth of the software in its corner of the market. The next few months will see the release of updated versions of RØDE's existing app based on the

FiRe platform - RØDE Rec - along with an anticipated range of newly-developed software.

RØDE President, Peter Freedman., states: "When we first looked at the smartphone market as a development area for RØDE, I knew that it wasn't enough to just make a hardware product. RØDE's goal from day one was to create a complete recording solution - a platform that we can build around."

"I had known and used FiRe for some time and considered it to be the best field recording app available. So in conjunction with its developers, Audiofile Engineering, we built RØDE Rec to further enhance its already impressive audio capabilities, as well as providing high-resolution support for all our hardware products, in

addition to the world's first 24/96 field recorder for iOS, the iXY".

"Today's purchase of the FiRe platform brings all of the IP in-house here at RØDE, allowing us to fully control the development schedule and realise many of the great plans we have for RØDE Rec and our iOS based customers around the world."

Matthew Foust, Managing Partner at Audiophile Engineering adds: "All of the features that make FiRe an incredibly powerful field recorder for iOS make it a perfect fit for RØDE. Creating great audio software is our passion, so we're elated to see RØDE unite FiRe with best-in-class accessories and leverage their global presence to put it in the hands of even more people around the world."

Audiofile Engineering will continue to support FiRe customers while the transition is occurring.

For more information on RØDE software apps for Apple iOS go to www.rodemic.com/software



The Tiffen Company introduces new integrated MPTV Filters

The Tiffen Company has released details of its brand new Tiffen Satin and Tiffen Black Satin MPTV Filters in 4 x 4, 4 x 5.65 and 6.6 x 6.6 sizes. "Optical filter development is the cornerstone of the Tiffen Company, and our new line of integrated Tiffen filters, which includes Film Looks, exemplifies the forwardthinking innovation behind our commitment to continued research and development," says Steve Tiffen, President and CEO, The Tiffen Company. "This year, we celebrate 75 years of filter engineering excellence, and it gives me great pleasure to cross this milestone by expanding the Tiffen filter product offerings yet again. We look forward to seeing the tremendous images the creative world will make with the new line of Tiffen MPTV filters, including the new

Satin and Black Satin looks."

The filters work to suppress your talent's facial blemishes and wrinkles, subtly softening fine details to enhance and smooth skin, minus the obvious signs of filtration. A combination of mild halation and delicate optical softening elements adds a gentle glow to highlights and moderates contrast, with Satins producing a cleaner, muted diffusion compared to Black Satins. which create a warmer, grainier feel; although both filter types allow users to retain a clear, in-focus image.

The main benefits of these filters - as outlined by Tiffen - include their capacity to function as 'two filters in one'; thereby reducing the risk associated with reflections generated by stacking multiple filters. The filters are manufacturer from water-white glass and are available in ½, 1, 2 and 3 grades, allowing for a range of effects - subtle or more noticeable - to be applied to your footage.

The Tiffen Satin and Tiffen Black Satin Filters are available now through Tiffen domestic (US) and international dealers and distributors. Filter sizes and pricing includes: 4 x 4 for \$264 (approx. £173), 4 x 5.65 for \$431 (approx. £283) and 6.6 x 6.6 for \$531 (approx. £349). For more details visit their site at **www.tiffen.com**



NEW CUSTOM BRACKETS

UK distributor Flaghead Photographic has announced new additions to its versatile Custom Brackets range, with a number of options that will specifically appeal to videographers. Among the new launches is

the compact CB-Folding SAB Arca-Swiss-style camera quick release clamp for all cameras with a locking shoe mount on the upright. The CB Folding-SB 1/4" - 20 Mount is another basic folding bracket for use with all cameras, also with a locking shoe mount on the upright, along with the CB Digital-SB 1/4" - 20 Mount (non-folding) alternative. All of the brackets are manufactured from strong yet lightweight black anodized aluminium and are maintenance-free, with no lubrication



required. The new brackets are set to retail from around £33 upwards - check out www. flaghead.co.uk for further information or to find your local stockist.

NEW VINE APP

Vine Labs Inc. has announced its newly-available Vine app for Android 4.0 devices and higher. Also available for iPhone users, the updated app - available via https://play.google.com - provides users with a fun, simple way to share videos with friends and family. You get free, unlimited uploads and the facility to instantly post videos on Vine, then to share on Twitter and Facebook. You can also find, follow and interact with other users, explore trending posts and be inspired by editor's picks. Check it out on Google Play or the App Store for Apple device owners.



CANON LIEGRA MINI

Canon has announced the Full HD LEGRIA mini - a new digital creative camcorder that promises to give users "unparalleled flexibility and freedom to express and share their passions" - reflecting a growing trend for self-expression through video. To reveal more about the camera, Canon has created a video on their official YouTube page:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a 13D6VrlijA&feature=youtu.be. The LEGRIA mini will be available in the UK and Ireland from mid-September 2013 with an SRP of £269 and €329 respectively.





Globally-recognised as a technology leader in the media and entertainment sector, Technicolor has announced it's putting its expertise in Hollywood colour and imaging science to good use, with the company working to deliver improved viewing experiences for consumers at home and onthe-go. To this end, Technicolor has teamed up with Portrait Displays (www.portrait.com) to create a Colour Certification process that is said to guarantee the colour quality on any computer or mobile device display and has awarded the first 4K Image Certification to Marseille Networks (www. marseilleinc.com) for its system on chip to deliver stunning content on 4K televisions.

With these two certification programs, Technicolor is seeking to provide solutions to critical issues, such as inconsistent colour accuracy on computer and mobile devices, as well as the lack of content for viewing on 4K televisions. "Our expertise in working with Hollywood and our desire to deliver outstanding content drove us to develop the Colour and Image Certification processes," states Manuele Wahl, SVP, Technology Licensing, Technicolor.

Referencing Technicolor's collaboration with two Silicon Valley companies, she continues: "Portrait has two decades of experience in colour technology, licensing colour control software to more than 25 of the leading worldwide manufacturers of computing products including monitors, laptops, notebooks, and all-inone computers. Marseille is an innovator in video processing, compression and networking

technology and is the clear leader with expertise in upscaling content from SD to HD and from 2K to 4K."

With Technicolor 4K Image Certified products, the company seeks to ensure that consumers can be confident of a 4K source device's ability to deliver a stunning 4K Hollywood movie experience in the home from their existing HD content. The variety of different video resolutions, frame rates, and compression formats from the diverse sources involved with home viewing results in uneven levels of quality, which are particularly evident when viewing on a 4K TV. Technicolor's Image Certification initiative addresses this dilemma.

For more information on Technicolor Image and Colour Certification, head on over to www.technicolor.com

NEW PANASONIC SUPER ZOOM LENS

Panasonic's new DMC-FZ72 Super Zoom Camera pushes the boundaries with its industryleading 60x optical zoom lens (20-1200mm on a 35mm camera). The exceptionally wide zoom range offered makes this an ideal camera for a huge variety of everyday shooting situations, with its 140% wider angle of view (compared with 24mm lens) opening up scope for creative wide angle shooting as well as long-range subject capture. The zoom ratio can be expanded further using the camera's digital zoom, taking the total zoom range up to 120x equivalent.

Power OIS with Active Mode - as seen on the DMC-FZ200 model - provides approximately twice the correction angle at the telephoto end of the camera's zoom range, promising sharp, blur-free longrange zoom shots and nocturnal captures. The Active Mode and



Power OIS are also functional while you're shooting video, helping to maintain image quality even during filming while in motion. The DMC-FZ72 records highresolution full-HD 1,920 x 1,080 60i (NTSC, sensor output 30p) / 50i (PAL, sensor output 25p) videos in AVCHD (MPEG-4 / H.264) format. The AVCHD format excels in the compatibility with AV equipment like HDTVs or Blu-ray Disc players and the video can be played back by simply inserting an SDXC/ SDHC/SD Memory Card or by connecting with a mini HDMI cable. Alternately, users can choose

MP4 at 30p (NTSC) / 25p (PAL) for video recording, which has a higher compatibility with PCs. The FZ72 boasts the highly realistic Dolby Digital Stereo Creator and a newly developed Wind Shield Zoom Microphone for superior video sound. The camera's new 16.1-megapixel High Sensitivity MOS sensor and LSI Venus Engine work together to maintain the best possible image quality, while further features such as Light Speed AF, 9fps burst mode and full manual controls add to this newcomer's potential as a decent all-rounder. The DMC-FZ72 will have an RRP of £369.99 - full details at www.panasonic.co.uk



NEW MMC-GO MINI

Following on from the extraordinary worldwide success of the Hague MMC Mini Motion Cam Stabilizer, Hague Camera Supports has announced that the new MMC-GO Mini Motion Cam for Action Cameras is now available and is "expected to be of great interest to this ever growing market". Suitable for action cameras such as the GoPro, Drift and Liquid Image Ego, the MMC Mini Motion-Cam Go Stabilizer is a handheld stabilizing system that's ideal for use with lightweight handheld cameras between 0.3kg to 0.8kg. The Hague Mini Motion-Cam's gimbal has a highly polished ball with a nylon socket ensuring super free movement, making it - claims Hague - "more effective than any other ball type stabilizer on the market" and perfect for action camera users to achieve Steadicamstyle shots. Made of aluminium with zinc plated counterbalance weights, the Hague Mini Motion-Cam

PENTAX RICOH TO CHANGE ITS NAME

Pentax Ricoh Imaging Company Ltd. has announced that it is changing its company name to Ricoh Imaging Company Ltd. effective from August 1st. 2013. The company has also unveiled its future product brand strategy: both Pentax and Ricoh products will remain in the market under the new name to reinforce the company's commitment to the business with Pentax becoming the brand for all DSLR, interchangeable lens cameras and binoculars,

and Ricoh becoming its brand for compact cameras and new technological innovations. The Pentax Ricoh Imaging Company was formed in October, 2011 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Ricoh Company Ltd. to provide more consumer-oriented offerings. The goal is to build on the strength and awareness of the Ricoh brand, along with the superior technical innovation of Pentax products to deliver a worldclass consumer experience.

PENTAX A RICOH COMPANY

CORRECTION

In the last issue, our kit review team used an image relating to the Mini Crane M1. We have since been approached by Proactive UK Ltd., who stated 'Your article on page 100 of the August edition of Digital FilmMaker shows the Rollei M1 Jib. The picture copyright is Proactive UK Ltd. as we are the UK and Ireland Distributor for iFootage products including the iFootage Mini Crane M1, Mogopod and Wildcat. Rollei are not the manufacturer, they are a distributor of this product. Please make this clear in your next issue.' Digital FilmMaker apologises for any confusion. The Jib is on release in the UK and is available from Proactive: http://www. proav.co.uk/iFootage-M1-Mini-Crane/p31994.aspx

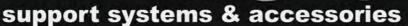


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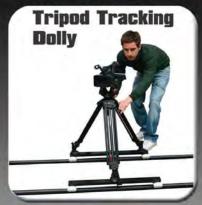








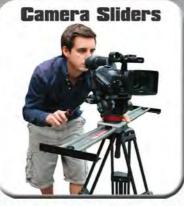


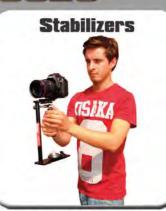


BUY DYLINE OR CALL DHE SES SIDEX











On his latest feature project Seven Cases, Director Sean J Vincent employs a multitude of camera movement techniques. Here, he explains how these can add production value to your indie movies

One of the first giveaways of a low-budget production is the way the camera moves. In early work, most of us either leave the camera on the tripod or go handheld.

The combination of either static or wildly jerky moves is a surefire sign that you didn't budget for a dolly, steadycam or jib. It's easy to think that you don't need these tools if you've got a great story, and to a certain extent, that is true. But, subtle camera movement can help tell your story and focus the viewer's eyes right where they need to be. Moving the camera through the action and shooting from multiple angles in one shot can bring a dynamic to your movie that is hard to achieve without these specialist tools. Moving the camera can make more work with regard to lighting and focusing, but the effort will be rewarded with shots that say more in a shorter space of time than multiple

cuts would do. Cutting constantly is tiring to watch...but a floating camera experience can be incredibly magical and bring a less exciting scene to life. Let's look at the various ways to move the camera and see how they can be implemented in your production.



Firstly, you're probably well aware that you can move the camera on the tripod giving you pan, tilt and combinations of both. There's also up and down, or pedestal movement, as it's known. Not many tripods can do this and it's rarely seen, but can be useful sometimes. The other 'movement' you can do without anything specialised is 'zooming'. This isn't strictly camera movement, as all you're really doing is changing the focal length of the lens, (and on cinema or stills lenses, this isn't easy to do well) but it can work in certain situations. Anyone who's seen Django Unchained will remember the many zoom shots used by Mr Tarantino...it's unusual in cinema and traditionally avoided as it often smacks of home video, but if done well and in the right context, it can work a treat.

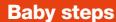
Dolly

Often the first port of call when filmmakers move into more adventurous camera movement techniques is the dolly and track or its smaller brother, the slider.

A dolly is a platform that the camera mounts into, which is then moved backwards or forwards on a track, or sometimes just on the floor (assuming the floor is flat and smooth). There are three basic kinds of dolly:

1) The track dolly. Like the name suggests, it rides on a track and the camera op usually rides on the dolly too.

A camera slider



When you first start handling a jib, use a nice wide lens with optical stabilisation on it. It'll make your shots work without you having to master pulling focus on a camera that's moving around on the end of said jib. The kit lens that comes with most DSLRs and Super 35mm cameras is perfect. Once you're used to the jib you can then start experimenting by calling on the help of prime lenses and trying to hit focus points during the jib moves.



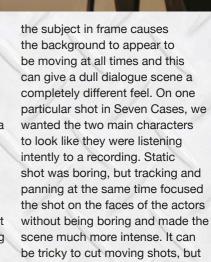
2) The Doorway Dolly. Simply a full-sized dolly, which travels without tracks on the floor and fits through a standard doorframe.

3) The camera Slider. A small piece of track that the camera mounts on (minus the camera op). These can slide on either skate

There are two basic shots you can get with a dolly. A dolly-in or



Once you've got used to moving the camera on a dolly, you can combine dollying with pans and tilts to follow the action. Using a tracking shot combined with panning to keep





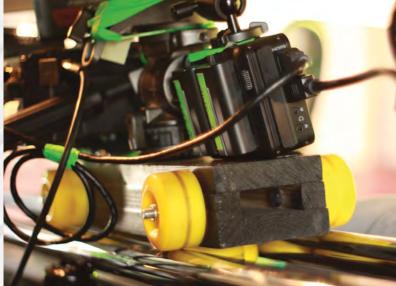
dolly-out, which means moving the camera closer to, or further away from the subject while filming, or the tracking-shot, which is a sideways movement, often following the subject, but sometimes just moving the camera out from behind a wall or piece of furniture on set to reveal the subject of the shot. Dollies create an amazing sense of moment, even if used very subtly. You need to rehearse the shot and watch out for getting the track in shot on long

dolly) is often mounted on a pair of tripods or sometimes on a table and is used where there isn't room be used when time is an issue. work in conversations and a slider is much quicker to set up than a full-sized dolly. Motorised versions are also available, but I'd avoid these unless you're still shooting timelapses. We used a custombuilt 2-metre long mini-dolly/big slider for Seven Cases. It mounts on either a pair of tripods, or the floor and the camera sits on a skate wheel-based dolly. It gives me the speed and convenience of a slider with the longer travel of a full-sized dolly.

Quick release camera plates

you will instinctively know when a

As soon as you start moving your camera from tripod to dolly, to jib and so on, you start to notice the importance of quick release camera plates. Do yourself a favour, pick a popular and good quality brand and size and buy enough to mount one on every bit of camera mounting gear you own. Then, when you're in a hurry on set you can move the camera from gear to gear without getting the screwdrivers out.







cut 'grinds' on you and finding the perfect cut point is just down to timing and experience.

Jib or Crane

A jib (sometimes known as a crane - especially if it's bigger) is a great device for moving the camera in a multi-directional way. You can move the camera up, down, left, right and twist it anyway you choose, all at the same time.

Cranes are frequently used for establishing shots, often slowly rising up to reveal the location of

the following scene, but they can be used much more creatively to put the camera in unusual positions and then move it with the action. I like to put the camera facing straight down on to the action sometimes. It gives a unique angle that really puts the characters in 'the frame' in a way a standard shot cannot.

There was a shot where we had someone climbing a ladder and the jib gave us the option to follow them up the ladder and then continue the shot once they got

to the top. If we had shot this on a tripod and just tilted the camera up as the character went up the ladder, we would have ended up looking up at quite a steep angle. But, by following him at his head height the whole time, we feel much more connected to him and what he is going through. The shot also looks much more interesting as the background is moving all the time and focus is always on the actor's face. It gives the viewer more connection to his emotional state, be it nervousness,

determination or whatever. That would be hard to convey if we were just watching him go up from the ground.

Another trick I like to use is to utilise the jib to slowly but surely pull away and up from a character to imply isolation. It's quite subtle, but these kinds of moves speak far louder on screen than dialogue or music alone. Camera movement is all about showing emotions and implying feelings without the need for other sensory input.

We've probably all seen the







line to above it and suddenly the feeling of the scene changes.

From a practical point of view, jibs can be a bit cumbersome. They require counterweights, are often pretty heavy and need a solid tripod to mount on. But, once you are set up on one, you can leave the camera on the jib for a lot of the shots you might need. I'd certainly recommend getting some wheels for the base of your tripod to mount the jib onto - it makes getting it into the ideal position much easier, so it's worth the extra outlay to save time. Beware of removing the camera from the jib without having someone hold the other end and always mind your fingers. Jibs are good at crushing them!

SteadyCam

The steadycam made its first appearance back in 1971 and they have become almost ubiquitous since. Based around a gimbal and a body-worn mounting system, steadycams enable the camera op to walk, run and move quickly while shooting a perfectly smooth and steady shot. There are now many different kinds of camera stabiliser, ranging from small systems designed for DSLRs, to big systems capable of holding a full-sized camera. Tracking and dollying shots are often left to the steadycam operator these days as they are quicker to set up and you don't have a huge track in shot.

You can buy cheap(ish) systems

that you can mount your DSLR or similar on and operate them yourself, but these systems all rely on the quality of the operator and you're better off a lot of the time just hiring someone who does this on a regular basis. I've used a small steadycam system quite a lot in the past and I was never blown away by the results. The shots certainly have a unique and attractive 'floating' quality to them, but I was never able to get consistent results.

Motorized Gimbal Systems

Fairly recently, we've had a development spawned from the growing HeliCam industry in the form of the motorised gimbal stabiliser. These devices use brushless motors and gimbals to mount the camera on a handheld rig, which automatically keeps it isolated from the operator's movements. A second operator then usually controls the camera's movement that you do want... focus, angle of shot and so on. Like steadycams, these will require mastering before you get great results, but they represent the future of wobble and vibrationfree camera movement. I would think in the not too distant future, these systems will be commonplace and attached to everything from cranes to dolly's

Safety first!

Having your prized camera rig mounted on a jib or a dolly means that you'll have to be extra careful with it. Jibs can easily become unbalanced and either drop suddenly or sometimes fall over altogether. Dollies, or more specifically, sliders mounted on tripods can topple with the slightest of knocks. Make everyone on set aware of this and makes sure the camera is never left unattended. It's tempting to leave the camera on your shoulder rig and mount the whole thing on your dolly or jib, but check the weight limit. It'll end up breaking the equipment if you overload it.

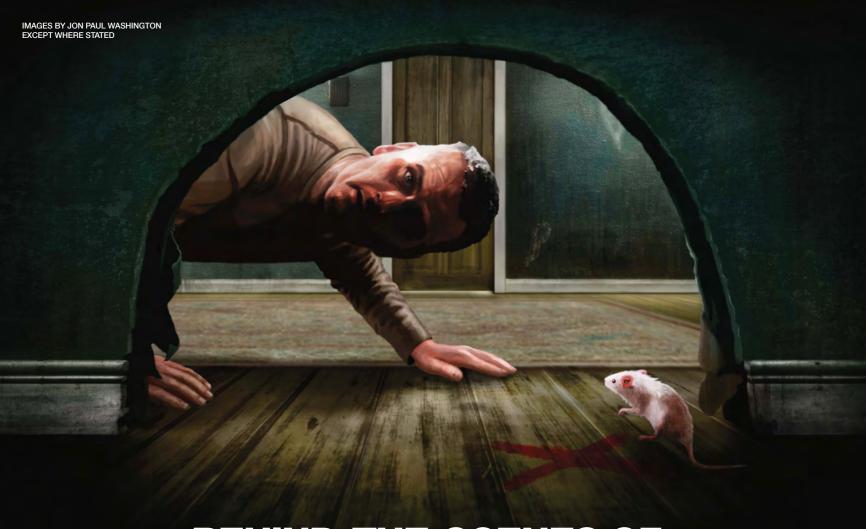


and, perhaps, be mounted on vehicles for butter smooth shots every time. At the moment, they are kind of expensive and out of reach of most of the lower end of the indie market.

An important thing to remember with all of these camera movement techniques is that using any one of them too much isn't a good idea. Constantly dollying or tracking all the way through a film is just as dull as not moving the camera at all. All of these movements imply a sense of emotion to a scene and you need to learn to tell the story using all of them and also learn when a static, locked off shot is best. Just because you've blagged a MoVi for the day, don't make all your shots run around in circles!

Next time, I'll look at mounting cameras on moving vehicles, crash-cams and other interesting ways of getting unique footage for your indie film...including some alternatives to the MoVi.





BEHIND-THE-SCENES OF

MOUSE-X

Jon Towslon talks to writer/director Justin Tagg, the man behind stylish new sci-fi-fantasy short Mouse-X

Imagine. You awake in a room. You have no idea how you got there. Then you discover that in the rooms around you are a thousand clones of yourself, all of whom have woken up in exactly the same mysterious situation. That's the premise of Mouse-X, an intriguing and stylish new sci-fifantasy short by writer/director, Justin Tagg. Mouse-X was shot in a warehouse in Lincoln on a budget of £5,200. But you wouldn't know it, thanks to the talent and ingenuity of Justin and his cast and crew, which includes BAFTA-

winning Director of Photography, Hákon Pállson and lead actor Julian Nicholson. Mouse-X features hi-tech sets, state of the art CGI, and sound design by leading movie trailer composers Verbal Vigilante (Oblivion, The Dark Knight Rises) - all going to prove that, when it comes to independent filmmaking, a little tenacity and vision (and crowd funding) can go a long way. These are all qualities that Justin possesses in spades; and good thing too, as Mouse-X required weeks, months, even years of thought and effort on Justin's part

to make happen. Like all films, Mouse-X started with an idea.

"I've been writing for a very long time." Justin reveals. "When I was at primary school I used to enter all the short story competitions, and I loved it. One of my favourite things to do was to take myself to a corner and write a story. When I went to university and made The Paperboy (2003), that was a bit of a revelation for me because that was the first time I'd even considered making films; it was an accident that I'd even joined a filmmaking course. It was just the opportunity

to tell stories in that medium that interested me." The Paperboy shows all the signs of the directorial talent that Justin displays to full effect in Mouse-X: the visual storytelling skills, the tight cutting, the elegant shot design, especially so when you consider it was made for thirty quid. Even so, despite pulling off this little feat, the young director wasn't sure at the time how to make his dream of directing more films happen. "When I left university and The Paperboy was doing its 'rounds' across the world, I genuinely didn't know what step



to take to continue making films. It seemed really difficult to try to get the funds necessary to make things. Actually, a lot of the things I've got in the slate of what I want to make over the next few years are based on short stories that I've written maybe at the time I was at university, or a couple of years after that. Even the very first draft of Mouse-X will have been in 2003, which was the year I graduated."

It was only a couple of years ago, after Justin had been teaching at the University of Lincoln that he started to look towards getting back into production after that lengthy hiatus. "I thought, I love this, I love teaching, but the only reason I got into doing the teaching was because I really like the combination of, on the one hand, working with people who are telling new stories, but then also getting on with my own work, and there wasn't any of that going on, so I forced a day into my week every week where I was focused very heavily on bringing my films to life."

Experience had taught Justin that his comeback project would need to be chosen very carefully. "When I decided to make this particular film I'd got a whole series of short stories that I'd

of film. I would sit down with the story and start mapping out the key visual scenes that will take us from one moment to the next, the clues we need to take us through the story. Mouse-X is potentially very confusing. It's about a man trapped in a building with a thousand clones of himself. He wakes into a room and has no idea where he is before he discovers that in each of the rooms around him, clones of himself have woken up in the exact same situation. As he's moving between these rooms they cross each other's paths, but almost invisibly. So he'd have come into a room and another clone might come in but backwards, so he hasn't seen them, and he has to dive behind the counter so he's not seen. Their paths don't cross for a long time. Actually, the most complicated part of this whole process was the geography of the set. What I did after I'd written the first draft of the script was, I just put something out on Twitter and said

written over the last few years," he reveals, "And I just sat down and put my entrepreneurial hat on, and thought okay, I need to make something that's achievable, that's possible to shoot for a relatively low budget, that I can do with minimal characters, minimal locations, and possibly no dialogue because that's going to help us when we come to the shoot as well. This was the story that stood out."

Writing the script wasn't massively difficult as Justin naturally writes visually. "It's something I was taught to do at

university," he agrees. "So any prose writing I do is always very visual and you can see the breaks, you can see the scenes, and you can see how it would turn into a piece



'Look, I want as many people as possible to read this and tell me what they think.' What I was looking for was, given that it could become confusing visually, it surely would be even more confusing if it was written down, so I needed to get feedback to find out if people were following this one single character through the story, or getting lost as we introduced new versions of him."

As Justin describes his writing process, his skills and techniques as a storyteller and director become increasingly apparent to the listener. "It all comes down to point of view and how we introduced new clones.

The way that it would have got confusing

was if we'd stepped back too often from the action and had too many shots which were in particularly wide angles before we'd introduced which one was our clone, which was the guy that we were following. So we take him directly from the place he's just come from and then, as somebody new is introduced, we make sure that we get a point of view of where he's looking as they enter the room, so we're instantly inside his head. Once we ground our lead character geographically into the room, you're much less likely to confuse him with anybody else. Also, I tried to work

out that they

would cross paths at very specific stages which meant, for example, that Anderson, who's the lead character and therefore all of the clones, ends up being each one of the clones he's seen before. Almost accidentally, he falls into an intuitive patter where he does what they did. So each clone has a particular place, they're met at a particular moment at a particular time, and that means that it's much easier to ground our lead character in his own physical space and separate him from where they are."

Sounds complicated and fiddly: it's not surprising then, given his visual sensibility and sense of directorial control that Justin looks to one of cinema's great masters for inspiration. "Although it's almost cliché to say it, there's almost no doubt that the director who has influenced me most is Alfred Hitchcock. There's a scene in North by Northwest, which is just before the famous crop

This network began to grow...and gave me the opportunity to start hand-picking the people I wanted to work with

duster scene. Cary Grant is stood by the side of a dusty road. He's just gotten off a Greyhound bus and he's looking for this spy that everybody has mistaken him for. Over about seven minutes nothing happens in that scene. Nothing! I think a car comes past one way, one goes past the other way, a truck comes past and dusts his suit, and then a man arrives whom he questions and says "Are you waiting for somebody?" In that seven minutes nothing much happens, and yet it's one of the most interesting and intense moments of cinema that I can remember. That's grabbed me always, the idea that it's not what you see, it's what you don't see. It's giving the audience a piece of information and then whilst they've got that information, you know that they're constantly asking a question. If you can keep that question running you can hook them without having to have anything too fancy or explosive."

Drawing on his knowledge and influences, taking the step back

into filmmaking after several years' absence proved to be easier than Justin had thought it would be, partly because, right from the start, he had very clear ideas about what he wanted to achieve with Mouse-X. "The aim of Mouse-X was always: build a crew that I could work with again; meet the contacts that could help us to find funding more easily for future productions; and find an audience that wants this kind of film and carry them forward into future films as well." So how did Justin set about achieving his objectives? "I guess it all started with crowd funding. From there, it wasn't just contributions financially that we got, it was also a tremendous amount of interest from crew, and then from friends of friends of people who had contributed. All of a sudden this network began to grow around me and gave me the opportunity to start hand-picking the people I wanted to work with. We've got a guy who won a BAFTA for new talent in cinematography last year called Hákon Pállson,

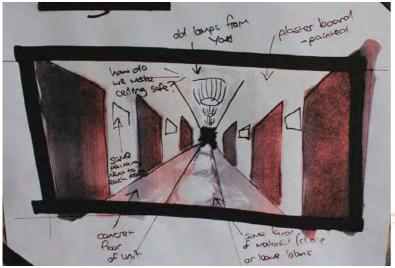
who's from Iceland. We accessed him through our lead actor. We'd had a DP signed up, but at the last minute he dropped out. Julian, who's cast as Anderson, said "This guy, I've worked with him twice, Hákon, he's great, he's not afraid to say no", which is a really important trait in a crew because you don't want yes-men. You don't want people to be difficult the whole time, but if you've got yes-men you've got no new ideas."

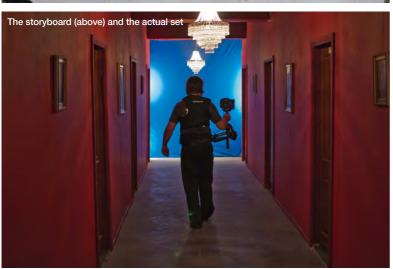
Justin found other crew members just by getting out and about and meeting people. "We got our first Assistant Director, Charlette Kilby, because we went to the Guerilla Filmmakers Master Class, which is hosted by Chris Jones every year, and used that as a huge networking opportunity. We found our editor, James Page, there as well. It was all people who'd heard about the

project."

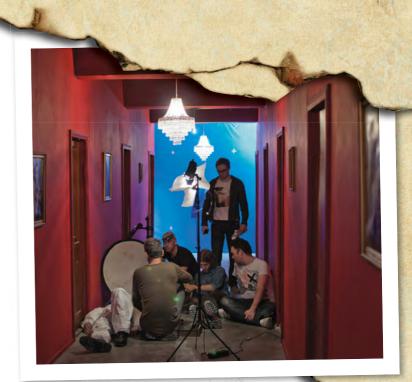
Whilst that may be the case, a budget is still essential. So how did Justin approach seeking crowd funding? "We picked a site called Sponsume," Justin confirms. "This was before Kickstarter had launched in the UK, and we were looking for a site that looked good. We knew that Sponsume didn't have quite as much foot traffic as Kickstarter, but it was my job to provide the people. The thing with crowd funding is: you are the master of your own destiny. We set off with a target of £3K and we used Facebook and Twitter to just tell the world about exactly what we were doing."

What hard advice does Justin have for anybody considering the crowd funding route? "One thing I'









say to anybody who's not done crowd funding before is you need to start early, you must start way before you launch, to build an audience. I didn't do that on Mouse-X because I'd never crowd funded before, so I didn't know what I was doing. The hardest thing was to build an audience who even knew about the project. So you've got to build a lot of people before you start, thousands of people on Twitter, a good

Facebook following, it all just means that you've already got people lined up who are willing to put money in. You've also got to work hard on your video pitch too."

Even though he'd raised his target through crowd funding, Justin still needed sponsorship in order to make the film the way he envisioned it. "We got to the end of the crowd funding and I looked at the budget, and I was

learning at this point because I'd never really done a budget like this before." Justin admits. "It's really quite hardcore when you've got to pay wages, you've got to have location fees, you've got to get insurance, you've got to feed people. All of a sudden it started adding up and we realised, yeah, we could shoot it with the money we'd got because we'd raised 172% of our budget, we were on our way to







It started adding up and we realised we could shoot it with the money we'd got...we'd raised 172% of our budget

doubling it by the time we finished, and that gave us £5,200, which was great but as soon as we realised how many people were excited by this it made me raise the ambitions for the project."

It was at this point that Justin really started to get tenacious. "So I thought, okay, I want to shoot on RED, I want to build my own set, I want to do all of these things, but I'm not going to be able to do it for £5,200 so what am I going to do? That was when the project really started to come to life because we realised we need to start getting business involved, and we need to start thinking about what we can offer them in return."

Justin managed to get hold of a RED Scarlet at much reduced cost, which he would never have been able to afford even with the full budget, but still needed the hard drives to go with it. "We went to Western Digital and caught them on a good day and they helped us out."

Justin also got in touch with a company called Craig and Rose, a paint company in Scotland who eventually provided the point

for the set. Justin explains. "The reason we got in touch with them was simply because we wanted the look of the set to be almost a faded luxury, a rotted elegance, so that you could see these expensive greens peeling away and there being other colours underneath them. We simply dropped them an email and said. "Look, this is the film we're making, this is why we think your company would be great to get involved with us", and added we wanted to produce for them (we'd seen they'd got a blog) a video that showed how we'd used Craig and Rose paint to produce the look of the film. I got a phone call

straight away from the managing director and he said "How much do you want?" We priced it up and Craig and Rose ended up contributing about £800 worth of paint for the set build."

"All of this starts to add up and I think we raised just over £10K in in-kind support from companies who just gave us stuff. Even in Lincoln, there's the hotel Double Tree, which is a Hilton Hotel chain. They contributed rooms for our cast and crew to stav in. Another local hotel called the Tower contributed a room for the guys to stay in. We got 80% off our building materials and tool hire. There's no way we'd have made this film if it wasn't for the contributions and the involvement of business."

Despite the incredible generosity of businesses, Justin still needed to problem-solve the biggest issue, which was building the huge set required to make the film. "When it came to our set build we'd go to companies and say "We need to build this set, it's a nineteen metre long corridor and a six metre by four metre room. with electrics, give us a quote." They'd come back to us and say, "We can do it for twelve thousand but you won't have walls, it'll just be hanging material." So we realised we'd have to build it ourselves. At first we'd tried to find a location because that would





make life easy, but the geography of the film, as I say, is quite specific and that meant that there needed to be a door in this place, a hole in the wall, and for the room to be of a certain size. So it was obvious that we couldn't find a location, or at least put the time into finding one, it was more straightforward to build one."

Once this decision was made, Justin soon discovered that the hardest part about building the set was finding the place to build it in. "We went to a lot of estate agents who simply said "Look, we'd love to help you out, but it's not worth our time to try to rent you something for a month." For a long time we were genuinely scuppered. I didn't know what we were going to do. We just kept knocking on doors and asking people. One day a receptionist dropped into



the conversation, completely by accident and said "If you rented a place for six weeks, landlords will get rate relief from council tax for three months after you leave." I thought that was interesting, a different angle. So we went back to the very first estate agent that we went to and ended up with a two and a half thousand square metre warehouse."

Although Justin can turn his hand to many things, by his own admission set building is not one of them, so he put an advert on Shooting People. "Now they demand that you put a certain amount of pay for that role, and it was difficult. We were very happy to pay for that role, but just didn't know how much you pay somebody to do that. We just offered a nominal amount per day, which was open to negotiation. We got a phone call from Mark Sutherland who is a film producer, carpenter and set builder. He's moving into producing more and more now, and he's very good at it, but he also happens to be very

good at building low-budget sets. He called up and said, "I want to do it, we need to negotiate the wages" which was reasonable. I met up with him in Kings Cross because our paths were crossing on a particular day, and we just sat down and mapped out the set. He talked me through what materials we needed. He said, "You need eight hundred metres of timber, sixty sheets of plasterboard." He basically set me the task and said "You need to get that for this amount of money" so I went on eBay, went to companies, started emailing people and calling them up. We got all this material in return for offering screen credits. A set we'd originally been quoted twelve thousand for - without walls - we built, painted, and lit for just under a thousand pounds, and it was completely safe as well."

Careful set design enabled
Justin and Mark to also overcome
some of the tightness of the one
week shooting schedule, as Justin
explains. "One thing that was useful
with our set build - when we started





Careful set design enabled Justin and Mark also to overcome some of the tightness of the one week shooting schedule

soon as we got involved with our Executive Producer, Graeme Cox, for example, and our Director of Photography, I would talk to them about this and get their advice. They said "If you can get hold of a RED or an Arri Alexa you need to shoot on that because this is good material, it's highly stylised and you

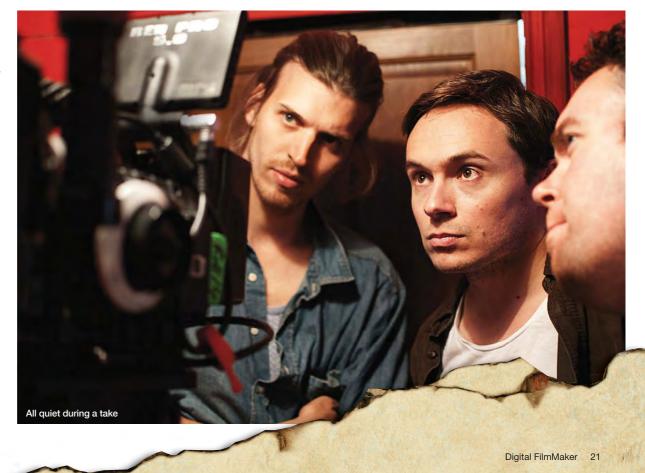
really want to pick up the detail." So that was the reason we shot on the RED. I went to the crew and asked the people that knew."

How did working on the RED affect the workflow of the production? "It's not been a problem actually, because everyone we've worked with has

been all set up for it. One thing I would say is that we've worked with people remotely on this production and obviously with sending RED files, it takes time. It's hard to upload these things. We spent a while thinking 'We've shot in 4K, so let's make this whole thing in 4K', but when it came down to editing, we learned that a lot of things - like The Hobbit - might be shot in 4K to get the detail, but is most often produced and screened in 2K. So we realised we don't need to be rendering this all out in 4K, it might be more trouble than it's worth. That's one of those learning things - I didn't imagine the problems that you can potentially encounter by shooting

working out how much time we've got to shoot, we actually had quite a lot of set-ups we had to get done in a day. More so than you'd probably recommend if I'm totally honest, and we needed to find ways of making that more possible. One way was to install lighting into the walls of the set, using bulbs that wouldn't flicker, that meant we were able to actually have a lot of the lighting as practicals. We were able then to throw in some fill in places. That saved a lot of time, because it meant that changing set-ups was no way near as complicated as it could have been."

Shooting on the RED also saved time, but again, this decision was based on careful consideration by Justin and his team. "Chris Jones had said "Aim for the best possible stuff you can get and then only change tactic when you can't get it." We could have shot on a 5D easily, because the university has a ton of those. We always had that option, but as



it and trying to screen it in 4K, with the difficulty of visual effects being produced at 4K. It's not just double the resolution, it's considerably more than that. We could have been adding zeros on to our budget and months onto our schedule to try to screen it on 4K."

The more Justin explains his process of filmmaking the more it becomes apparent that he is a director who prides himself on the thoroughness of his preparation. "There are a couple of things that were very specific and important to me," he explains. "Not all directors like to storyboard, a lot say "Well, if you're storyboarding, you're taking the life and improvisation out of it". I would personally say that's not true. Actually, the more you prepare the easier it is to improvise, you can make things up on the spot and you always know how they slot in with everything else that you're cutting. I'm okay at drawing, but certainly not the best, so I would be sketching out the storyboard frames and then we brought in a storyboard artist, Paul Burrow, who was also our concept artist, and he would turn them into better more accurate aspect ratios that would make more sense for anybody looking at them. Storyboards were essential actually, because we were working remotely with the DP until the shoot. He was flown in from Iceland, but before that I was able to send him storyboards and we'd sit on Skype and talk through page by page what we were looking at, and we'd talk about ideas for different shots, what wasn't



working. He'd come up with an idea and sketch it out. The same with visual effects, we could go to our team and say "What do you think to the way we're doing it?" They'd say, "That's not going to work actually. You need to take into account the fact you have blue screen over there and maybe you need to be shifting the camera a bit." What it did was allow us to accept and observe problems before we started. The best thing that we did with storyboards was to have them on the wall outside the production office, close to the set, so that we always had a visual as we were filming. It meant we could

cross each shot off as we filmed it, and could also go and look at the storyboards if we needed to change a shot to see if it would cut."

Although clearly a visual director, Justin also places equal emphasis on working with actors. "The other important thing was rehearsals, which are difficult when your lead actor lives in Spain! So again, we were doing Skype rehearsals, and that was a really interesting experience. You're actually kind of rehearsing with them through a camera, and it means you can use that for different purposes. We spent four weeks rehearsing before we started shooting. Every two or three days on the webcam we'd rehearse a scene, have a conversation, delve into the depths of the character's past and basically form a network of options that we could use on set. So when we started shooting we could improvise the whole way through,

but if ever it felt like we were getting stuck, I knew what buttons I needed to press to help Julian get into the right state of mind."

Thankfully all this preparation enabled cast and crew to stick to budget and schedule. "That's one thing that I'm very proud of. I think we maybe came in a few pounds under. That was down to the haggling we did before and the choices we made on set." Despite all the planning and preparation. Justin and the team did inevitably have to adapt ideas on the set. "There is one particular shot that we desperately wanted," Justin reveals, "A crane shot that followed our lead character up a ladder, with a blue screen at the top and a whole CGI thing that was going to fit in there, but we simply couldn't get the equipment. We had to rewrite the script slightly to find a different way of connecting the two physical places in the story. This could never have happened if we



Mouse-X has been a learning experience for Justin and one that he sees as a positive investment in his own future

hadn't have storyboarded. In fact, we tried to make it better than the original idea, and we added in a whole section that made even more sense I think."

In terms of the films visual effects, Justin explains them in these terms: "Some of them are done to save the budget, some are done simply because there's no way of creating this environment physically. There are three main areas in the film. There's a bit of tidying up - we did a good job with our set build, but there are a couple of shots where there are some light leaks. The two main things, though, are set extensions - we built a nineteen metre long corridor, which is pretty long, but still it needed to be longer in the story because of the number of different rooms coming from. The corridor had blue screen at both ends so that we could extend it in post. We only had one room whose actual door opened into a room, because we'd only built a one room set. The majority of the end sequence is CGI where our lead character emerges on to a roof top, and there's a wonderful kind of money shot where on all of the roof tops around him another clone appears, and there's this sea of identical buildings that bleed out into the horizon."

Justin finished filming Mouse-X in August 2012, and after followed lengthy post production. Apart from a little more work needing to be done on the aforementioned final scene the rest of the film is now complete, as Justin explains "The picture's locked, the sound's almost done, the music's great. We've done a couple of screenings for investors and executives, but at the moment they're still seeing the film with bits of blue screen in the background." Now Justin is deep into planning his distribution of Mouse-X: "We've been working out a festival strategy. It's a mix of great short film festivals, places that are internationally known, but also places that have film markets, because we want to go and meet sales agents, talk about the possibility of selling this film." Earlier this year, Justin and his team made their first foray to the Cannes festival in order to test the waters. "I needed to do the ground work so that this time next year, if we're there with Mouse-X, and

maybe even another project, I know who to speak to. The experience of Cannes this year was really quite phenomenal and we all came back thinking, yes we can do this, it's all there if you want it."

"We're not trying to make a fortune out of this," Justin admits, "We know there's not a lot of money in short films, despite the growing video-on-demand services and self-distribution. It's more important that it's 'buyable', if I can prove I can handle a commercial vehicle then maybe that strengthens the case for future projects." One of which is the possible feature version of Mouse X. "Something I'm getting more interested in, as more and more people we have spoken to have, from a financial point of view shown interest in that. We'll see!"

Clearly, as well as promising to be a remarkable film, Mouse-X has been a huge learning experience for Justin and one that he sees as a positive investment in his own future as a filmmaker. "One thing I've learned from this whole process is - coming as somebody who's not affluent, I don't have a lot of money, I can't finance my own films - you don't just tell the story of your



film, you tell the story of yourself. People buy into you, and what you tell them about what you can do and what you can offer. Don't be afraid to let people know about what you want to do and see what they think about that because otherwise, it's very difficult. In my experience, you don't often get a phone call from somebody who says please let me make your dreams come true, you've got to go out there and find ways of taking action to

make it happen."

Mouse-X is a testament to those words, and to the tenacity, ingenuity and vision of Justin and his crew. His approach is truly inspiring. He sums up his whole filmmaking ethos in a final remark: "I think the key to getting any kind of independent film made is this: you've just got to recognise that there are no brick walls, there's just a reminder to change direction." ■

www.mouse-x.com



ASK THE PRODUCER

Jonathan Sothcott, one of the UK's most prolific indie producers, answers your questions about filmmaking and the industry. He pulls no punches, but he gets films made. You can send your questions to Jonathan via email to dfm@jonathansothcott.com



CHEAP 'N' NASTY?

I've noticed that you, as a producer, seem to have been investing in your promotional push of late. Is there a cheap and easy way to do this, or is the only way to promote a film effectively simply by spending money on advertising?

Steve, Liverpool

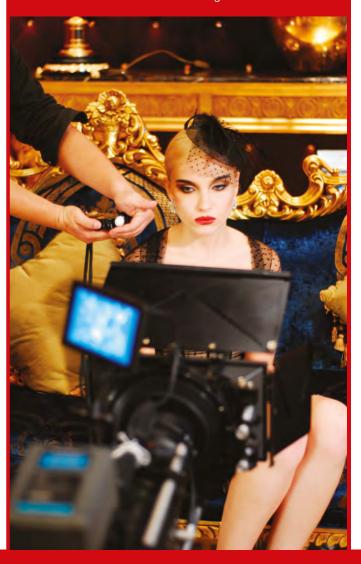
JS: I think social networking is a crucial part of marketing your films these days. And it is something that you need to spend time, rather than money on. Sure, big films are going to get TV spots, tube and bus advertising and all the rest of it, but for indies without huge marketing budgets the key is making your potential audience aware of your film and then incentivising them to buy it. The trick here is accurately and realistically identifying that audience - if you're making a gangster film, reach out to pages that are geared up to support this genre. You'll have different targets if you're making a horror. Just tweeting Time Out and Mark Kermode and asking them to retweet your trailer is going to get you nowhere fast. Also, on these sites you have to hammer your message home - that means retweet, retweet, retweet - better you over-saturate than languish in obscurity! Remember, if you can't be bothered to push your film, nobody else will be - be bold and aim high!

A CLEAN SWEEP

When you make films do you hire in the crew and equipment, and it differs with each project, or do you stick to using the same people if it's at all feasible?

John, Exeter

JS: Obviously, as you move from film to film certain people are unavailable, but I am lucky enough to have a core nucleus of talented people who I enjoy working with. This does make things easier as everyone knows how everyone else works and there's no 'new broom syndrome' - or very little anyway. As a producer though you have to be ruthless, there's no room for charity crewing and you can't carry dead wood - if someone isn't up to the job, move on and find someone else - this stuff is hard enough as it is!



A FORMAL OCCASION

What's the deal with costumes for filmmaking? We want to shoot a microbudget movie but have grand designs, with plenty of costumes being involved if at all possible. Is there an easy way to get around this on the cheap, or do we need to hire a presumably expensive costume designer?

JS: It depends if your film is modern day or period. Actual costume design is a bit of a

Dom. Slough

luxury at micro-budget level, particularly on modern day stuff - eBay is your friend here, you can buy almost anything you can imagine for pennies and often multiples. Between that and car boot fairs, that should take care of most of your costume requirements. If you need designer suits and dresses you have two cut-price options - unless you're making a James Bond movie, a black suit is a black suit, so go to Primark not Armani. And, if you really need something special but don't have the budget - and you're 110% sure you won't damage it - buy it on your credit card and then take it back for a



LIPPY SERVICE

I read your interview in a back issue about the making of Vendetta and was interested by the production planning that went into it. Can you tell me the best way to plan my own short film. Any tips and tricks?

Angela, Hull

JS: Preparation is, of course, key. The most important thing is for the key creative - director, producer, DOP, production designer/art director, locations, costume/wardrobe and sound to sit down together and go through the script meticulously. You might want make-up there too if it's anything beyond standard cast make-up. Troubleshooting in advance is obviously preferable to troubleshooting on the day and you'll find you'll iron out a lot of potential problems this way. It's also a great idea to sit down with key cast and do a read-through of the script - this'll also save you time on the day.



refund afterwards. If you do go down this route - which is not without substantial risk - make sure you don't take off the tags and labels. The final alternative is the elusive product placement - without big name stars, big name brands are unlikely to help. But small, regional boutiques might - especially if you promise them cool stills of their gear being worn as well as that all-important thanks on the end credits.

If you're making a period film, it's a little harder, though again eBay is your friend. There are certain historical recreation societies that might be able to help you (such as Vikings/army), but otherwise your best bet is probably an old-fashioned costume hire shop. I don't mean the sort that do plastic vampire teeth and spiderman outfits, but ones that have old and unusual stock, which they might be prepared to do a bulk deal on.

CONTRACT KILLER

We've managed to scrabble together a minimal budget for our next short, but do we just pay people what we can get away with or is there a going rate for filmmaking types? It might sound like a stupid question, but having produced films before where no money has changed hands, I'm finding this a particularly stressful experience that needs the advice of a professional, such as yourself.

lan, Dover

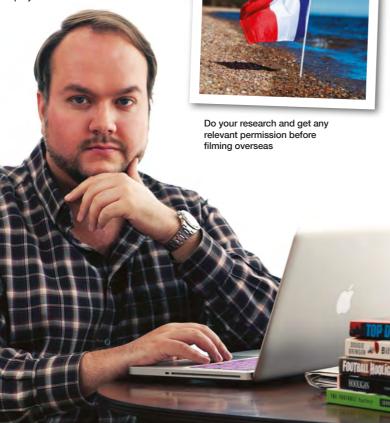
JS: You are obliged by law to pay everyone - cast, crew, runners and what not - National Minimum Wage on any commercial endeavor. Even if people agree to

There's no room for charity crewing and you can't carry dead wood - if someone isn't up to the job, move on and find someone else

work for free, they can still take you to an industrial tribunal later and claim these monies from you - even if they have signed a contract saying they agreed to work for nothing, they'll still win. It isn't up to an individual to decide whether they should be paid NMW - it is about whether what they are doing constitutes work in the eyes of the law.

While shorts are generally in that grey area where they're not commercial, but not entirely art either, they still require people to do 'work' to make them and therefore fall under NMW guidelines. A group of friends making a short in a weekend for fun would be exempt from this of course, but you still have to be careful - even the best friends fall-out making films and that's all it can take for someone to start proceedings.

The NMW debate is a divisive one - while it is, of course, right that everybody should be paid to work, it makes no allowance for film and theatre where efforts are often driven more by art than commerce. For now, however, you are best to err on the side of caution and ensure that everyone receives NMW payments.



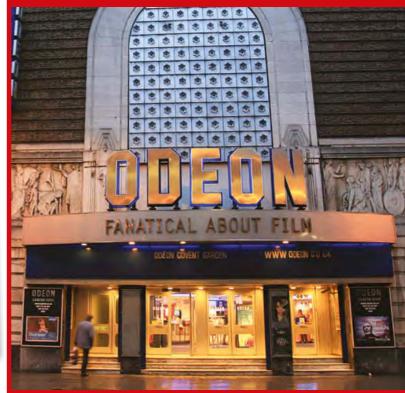
GUERILLA TACTICS

Have you ever made a movie overseas? If so, any ideas how to broach the legal perspective, in terms of using locations on foreign soil. My problem is I don't speak French, and we want to shoot some scenes in Marseille, mainly because we can get there thanks to the cheap airlines that head to that neck of the woods. I love France, but man, their beaurocracy can be crazy, so I'm sure this is a troubled concept. What do you think?

Dave, Manchester

JS: Yes I have. There are two ways to do this - with permissions and guerilla. The second option seems the easiest but often isn't, particularly in a country where you don't speak the language fluently. Depending on the scope of your project, the best thing to do is to find a native services company or - if you're making a short/micro-budget

project - a native co-producer. They will have a much easier job of acquiring permissions and suchlike than you will and will also be au fait with the area already. There are many websites where filmmakers can connect across the seas and you'll find that the right person on the ground will save you a great deal of time and money.



FESTIVAL FEVER

I really think my independent film knocks spots off much of the competition. However, I also think it deserves a cinema release, rather than hawking it around all of the usual film festival outlets. Do you think I'm in with a chance, or am I sadly mistaken?

Sam, Chertsey

JS: Without knowing what your film is, it isn't easy to answer that. Unless you're prepared to fund that theatrical release yourself (and anything is possible if you have the cash) that will ultimately be down to the film's eventual distributor, presuming one picks it up. People are very reluctant to pay to see films at the cinema these days and, when they do, the majority expect Avengers Assemble-style bang for their buck. That said, there is of course a thriving art house cinema community, particularly in London and other cities. Don't expect to make any money from the cinema release as these days it is simply a shop window for DVD and VOD sales down the line.

FAT-FREE DIET

What's your opinion on how long it takes to produce a decent feature? I've entered one or two short film competitions, which have had a really tight deadline. Presumably it's a different ball game entirely when you're working on a full-length film? Or do you know different?

Carl, Basingstoke

JS: That depends on (a) your definition of decent and (b) the script. In my game, we tailor the script to ensure that it can be filmed over 3 x 6 day weeks, the shoot time that makes the best sense economically. That said, if you're filming in one location

with 3 or 4 cast you might be able to shoot something in a week. The key to making a feature film effectively is cutting off all of the fat - including crew, cast, budget and locations. Shoot only what you need and don't carry any dead weight!

VLAD THE FILMMAKER

We're a couple of filmmakers who have been keeping an eye on your work and have noticed that a lot of it seems to make it to the supermarket shelves. Is this a solid foundation for actually making some serious money from filmmaking, or do film industry people tend to



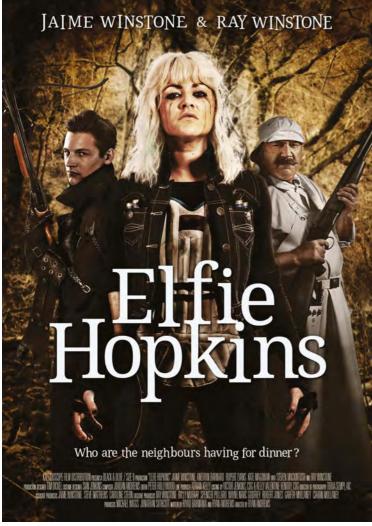
be a bit sniffy about it. We're keen to produce quality movies, but wouldn't mind making a little cash along the way too. Any advice would be much appreciated.

Phillip, Salford

JS: The only way you can make any money from physical sales as an indie filmmaker is by getting your film into supermarkets. Some 90% of new release DVDs in the UK are bought in supermarkets such as ASDA, Tesco and Sainsburys. There is a very precise science to this and distributors plan their 'sell in' to the supermarkets up to a year in advance. Not only does the film need to get into the supermarket (they are very strict about what they will and won't carry), but it has to perform well in its crucial first week of

release otherwise they will drop their stock...and if a film isn't on the shelves, the fact is that people won't buy it in any great numbers. In the filmmaking landscape of 2013 there is no room for 'sniffy' anymore - if your film doesn't succeed on DVD then it is unlikely to succeed at all.

As to what gets into supermarkets - well, in the indie sector it tends to be UK gangster subjects (everyone sneers at those black, white and red covers, but the fact is that they sell), some horror (the hardest and most competitive market), 20th Century war subjects (Nazis are always a winner for some reason) and Knights Templar-type sword and sandal subjects. At the moment, anything well-made about football hooligans performs well - it is also anticipated in some quarters that the next similar fad will be Viking films. ■



Jonathan was the producer of Elfie Hopkins in 2012

Don't expect to make any money from the cinema release as these days it is simply a shop window for DVD and VOD sales...



I recently put out a call for film scripts and, within a matter of days, received over 120 logline and synopsis submissions. I requested to read roughly 10 scripts. Although I read some excellent writing, none of them were selected. Why? Because they were all too expensive to produce. When I write screenplays on spec or for White Space Films (a production company I helped form), I always have budget restrictions in the back of my mind.

You can spend months or even years of your life waiting for the perfect script, but have you ever considered writing your own? This article series is a step-bystep guide designed

SEQUENCE TWO · Introduce antagonist and god / maths SEQUENCE ONE bad character

process right through to the final rewrite. I will be providing samples from my own low-no budget screenplay, The Law of Large Numbers, which I'm writing as the

The budget mindset

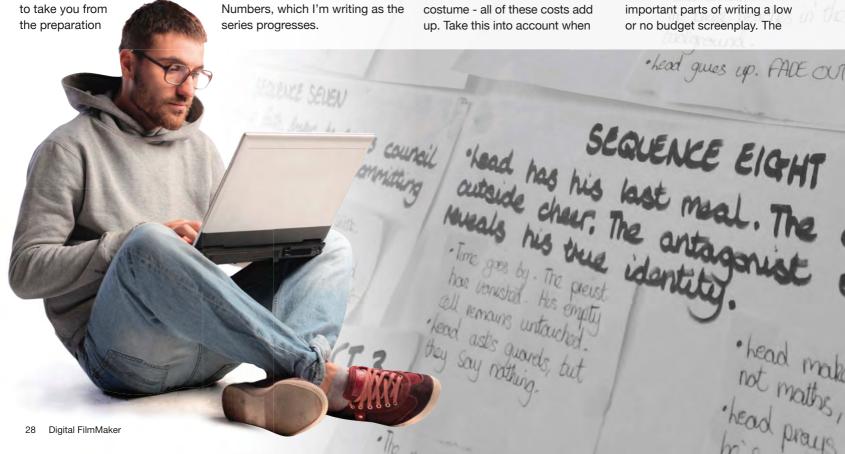
Before you start thinking of ideas, get into the budget mindset. Locations, actors, extras, props, costume - all of these costs add

you're writing your script. If you can lose something, or do it in a cheaper way without hindering the quality of your story, then do it. If you're a director or producer, think about the resources that you already have available. Perhaps you know somebody who owns an old farm that would be a good location for a horror; or maybe you're friends with a police officer who would let you use an interrogation room free of charge. Work around what you already have.

The Law of Large Numbers will be a feature length script with minimal actors, based in just one room.

Finding a setting

Setting is one of the most



setting itself can determine whether or not your script is feasible. When you are searching for a location, ask yourself if it's visually engaging, especially if it's based in one or two rooms. Pick a location that has character and will provide visual stimuli and drama. For example, if you put your characters in a broken down house you can already ask yourself questions about them, such as why are they living there? How did they become homeless? It may seem a little clichéd, but you get the idea.

The idea for The Law of Large Numbers stemmed from setting. On a recent visit to Bodmin Jail I was fascinated by how dark, dingy and depressing it was, and thought to myself, 'I wonder if I can come up with a story based on these cells?'. The location was perfect. Not only does it look interesting, but placing two characters in a prison cell poses the very obvious question of, why are they there? So I decided to use Bodmin Jail as the inspiration for my new screenplay and took photos for inspiration.

Writing a logline

The logline is essentially the pitch

of your screenplay. It's the one part of your writing that everybody will read. The logline alone will determine whether producers, agents and directors will bother to read your script or treatment. The purpose of the logline is simple - to sell your screenplay in one or two sentences. The logline should sum up the theme, genre and basic plot of your story.

After deciding to write a film with two characters in a prison cell, I came up with a logline. From this moment onwards I had a story. Since my story only has two characters they needed to contrast with one another. I was reading The God Delusion at the time and thought - people of religion and science often have polar opinions. From then on, I decided to make one of my characters a scientist and the other a priest; however, even that isn't dramatic enough, I needed to up the stakes. What's worse than being in prison...death







row. Not only did this pose even more questions relating to the severity of their crimes, but also makes the reader wonder if they'll survive. These ideas formed the basis of my logline:

'Two men are on death row; a man of science and a man of god. They both believe they've found the key to freedom, but in very different ways... One of them will survive."

Write your logline before you write anything else. Don't worry; you can change it when you finish your screenplay. Having it written down in front of you will just give you a general direction and make the plotting stages easier.

Writing character bio's

Personally, I have a love/hate relationship with character bio's. I don't usually write them when

I'm working on a higher budget screenplay because I don't want to pigeon hole myself. However, I think that knowing your characters is crucial, especially if you're writing a low or no budget film. Why? Because if you are writing a screenplay that's based in limited locations, with limited actors, your story has to be character driven. Don't make them too in-depth - just write a brief synopsis of their





are also related to their personal background, which will make the story believable. It was after writing the synopsis that the title came to me. The Law of Large Numbers is a theorem used to describe the result of performing the same experiment over time. Probability theory states that the result will eventually be the same. Matthew Weeks, aka the man of science, will use this way of thinking to try to escape prison. It's catchy, easy to remember, and sums up the vibe of the script.

SETTING (5) OPPOSITE PRISON CEUS

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Plotting

Plotting is much easier when you have a synopsis as a reference point. The trick to plotting is to filter the story down piece by piece. Start off with the broad scope and slowly narrow it down

until you have a clear indication of what you will write in each scene.

Work out your three act structure so you have an indication of how the plot and characters will progress. Set a rough outline for when the main events in your script will take place. The average script is between 90 and 110 pages long. The classic, Syd Field method, is to have the first plot point roughly 20 pages into your script. This first section, commonly known as 'the set-up', is where you introduce the characters and establish their primary goals and motivations. The second act is known as 'the confrontation'. During this section, the protagonist should be exposed to numerous issues that make their final mission

harder. This should conclude with the second plot point. The final act, known as 'the resolution', is generally the final 20 pages and must resolve the story in a satisfying manner.

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Spread your story across your three act structure. Give it a beginning, middle and end, and simply try to fill the gaps. Split each act into sequences. Pin eight sheets of A4 paper to your wall; two under the heading 'Act One', four under the heading 'Act Two', and two under the heading 'Act Three'. these sheets are your sequences within your acts. Write down a sentence to describe the primary plot point of each sequence.

Attach four index cards to each of these sheets. One index card will represent a scene within your sequence. This way you can flesh out your script in fragments. Having index cards displayed in plain view will allow you to look at your entire story from beginning to end and figure out exactly where it is going. It also gives you the option to chop and change the positions of your scenes with ease

THE CLASSIC SYD FIELD THREE ACT STRUCTURE

ACT II ACT III First Half Second Half Inciting Climax Pinch 1 Pinch 2 Incident Plot point 1 Plot point 2 Midpoint

SET-UP

CONFRONTATION

RESOLUTION



Sequence One:

Introduce Matthew Weeks (protagonist) and establish his maths routine.

Index card 1

- Description of cells and general setting.
- Matthew scratching something into the floor.

Index card 2

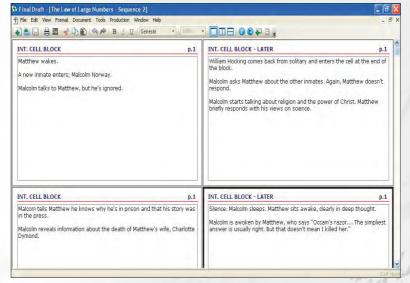
 Matthew wakes up and starts finding ways to entertain himself
 working out, watching the sun through the window, eating, scratching messages into the walls.

Index card 3

- It's Sunday. Two guards enter and ask Matthew if he wants to go to the prison chapel. He declines.
- Matthew watches the guards leave, then scratches the image of two stick men on the wall and makes a note of the time.
- The wall of Matthew's prison cell is revealed - an abundance of mathematical formulas.

Index card 4

- Matthew sits in silence.
- The door opens. Malcolm enters. He's escorted by two guards and is housed in the opposite cell.
- Malcolm begins preaching to Matthew, but is ignored.



This first sequence is the first half of 'the set-up'. It establishes Matthew's character and hints towards his primary goal and how he plans to achieve it. It also informs the reader that he's not a man of religion, so when the priest is introduced, the contrast is already clear.

Research

When you have your logline, character bio's, synopsis and plot mapped out, start your research. Don't make the mistake of getting too hung up on research prior to preparation. Remember that your script is a work of fiction. When you are creating your world there are no rules. If you start the

research before you begin plotting, you could easily start questioning everything you do.

The primary research in the The Law of Large Numbers came from two places - a maths textbook and the bible. The maths textbook has helped me understand probability theory in greater detail; and the bible has passages and quotes that are relevant to Malcolm's character.

The next step

The most important thing to do when you are writing is to keep pushing through. Sometimes you'll feel like it's the last thing in the world you want to do and that all of your ideas are awful. If that's the

case then just remember that bad writing is better than no writing at all. So do whatever you can to stick with it and get the job done. You can always come back further down the line for a bit of tweaking where necessary. The next article in this two-part series will cover the writing process and getting your first draft down on paper.

www.adammanuel.com www.whitespacefilms.com

30 Day Checklist

Day 1

Write a short description of your setting(s).

Day 2

Write a logline.

Day 3

Write a short character bio for your protagonist and antagonist.

Dav 4

Write a short synopsis of your entire story.

Day 5-7

Write a sentence to loosely describe each act.

Day 8-15

Write a short sentence to describe each sequence within your acts.

Day 16-23

Write 3-4 scenes on index cards for each sequence.

Day 24-30

Polish your story.



VIOLIN - A LOW/NO BUDGET SHORT BY JON CAMPBELL

A well-written short film can have just as much depth as a feature and the same preparation process applies when you are script writing. And, as is the case with features, shorts have a central theme and a story with a beginning, middle and end - it's just much more

condensed.

Violin is the latest short by White Space Films and was written by company founder Jon Campbell. Jon originally wrote Violin so the company had a project to focus on between scheduled filming dates for other productions. For





this reason, it was written with simplicity in mind. While all of the previous productions have required complex set design or location rental, Violin only has two primary locations - both of which are houses. As the script was written with easy to access locations and minimal production values, acquiring finance wasn't an issue and Jon managed to move from the writing stages to production in under two months. Violin may be short, but the script was written with many themes in mind.

Logline:

Violin tells the heartwarming story of a young boy and the only gift that's available to him to give to his ailing grandfather. It is a story of separation and loneliness and loss and love. ■



MAKING MUSIC VIDEOS

Tom Paton takes us on a tour of the unique challenges that lie ahead for anyone thinking about a career producing music videos

There was a time, not that long ago, when making music videos for relatively well-known artists all but guaranteed you a sizeable budget, a comfortably large crew and maybe even a little director's chair with your name on...but those days are gone my friends. Making music videos in the 21st century is a jungle and, if you want to be the king of the swingers, you're going to need to teach yourself a skillset not normally associated with being a creative filmmaker, you're going to need to think like a businessman.

Handling budgets, creating a strong team, cutting corners and selling your vision to people whose main priority is to make

money from record sales is all part of the learning curve that comes with producing music videos. This will mean compromise, and lots of it. I've known many filmmakers who see compromise as 'The Man' trying to ruin their art, but for me it's simply the reality of trying to craft a career out of your passion and the compromises will only come thicker and faster the more you climb the film world ladder. So, learning to handle the opinions of others on low budget music videos is a good way to train your brain. ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF ROSS DAY & ASHLEY PATON



Where to start?

In 2010 my business was completely focused on the live event world, producing media for clubs, festivals and tours (it still is a big part of what we do). But I'd always imagined myself directing features, taking my wacky ideas and making them a reality. So I decided that the business would start to branch out into music videos as a place to cut my teeth directing and running a crew. Like most people in the beginning, I was under the assumption that it would be somewhat glamorous, that I would spend my days watching a monitor, whilst a runner brought me coffee and that the vision I had in my head would be easy to translate to the screen. I was wrong, and many hard lessons were learnt in that first year of directing.

There is no better way to learn than to throw yourself in at the deep end and hope that you don't drown. Find yourself a musician that has little to no budget and who will be grateful for any content regardless of quality, and offer to make them a music video. I had met a few people already in the music industry through my live event work, and got them to offer around £500 budget for me to try my hand at directing. Those early videos of mine aren't





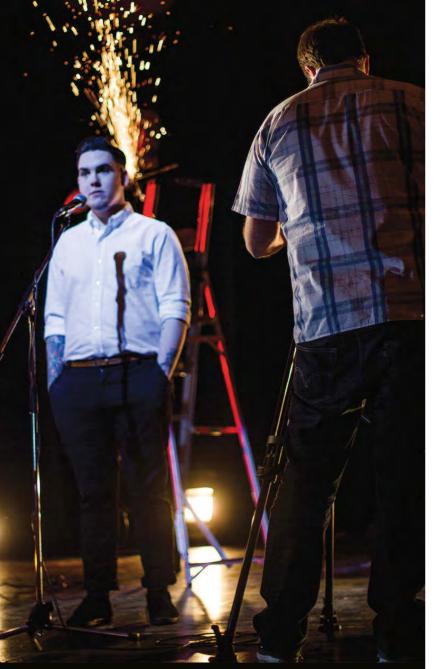
exactly showreel worthy, but they did help to inform my style as a filmmaker going forward. Those videos contain the early seeds for what has gone on to become a way of identifying my work.

The same will be true of your first attempts. You should be experimental here and try out different camera angles, moves and edits to see what works well for you as an artist. The more videos you do, the more you will begin to refine them and weed out the things that don't work so well. Your first few music videos will be a training ground for you to build confidence and figure out your style, so don't be

disheartened if they don't look like a Kanye West video straight away. Instead, concentrate on finding out how to make your ideas gel on screen and translate well to an audience.

It's all in the concept

There will be a time in your career where the ideas are presented to you. Where you are approached for you visual prowess and technical knowhow. But, if you are just starting out, then that time is not now. The landscape of the industry is rapidly changing, and to separate yourself from the pack you will need to be a one-man army, capable of



seeing a project right through, from conception to completion. At this stage, your work will likely be judged on the quality of the concept and its ability to connect the song with the audience. Record labels and musicians will contact you for a pitch, a written breakdown of the vision you have for the video and how it relates to the track.

Everyone I know has a different procedure for coming up with his or her ideas. Perhaps yours will be some Zen time in the quiet, or maybe you will get your ideas from the chaos of everyday life - you may even do your best thinking on the toilet. Whatever works best for you. ideas should always be at the forefront of your mind. Even if you have no impending projects on the horizon you should still

be dreaming up your next ten concepts. I have my little black book (a notepad I have had for years) in which I jot down two or three sentences of an idea whenever they pop into my head. When I am sent a track to make a pitch on, the first thing I do is consult my little black book to see if any of my previous ideas work with the song.

The next step is to flesh out that idea and match it to the core theme of the song. The theme of a track is often dictated by either the lyrics or the emotion it evokes. It's often a good starting point to ask the musician directly what they were trying to convey with the song and use that as a jumping off point. Once you have a strong connection between your idea and the song, you will need to script it out and use

Whilst you are working on the video for the current single, they will already be lining up the next single



mood boards to show the label the tone and visual style you intend to give the video. If they give your idea the green light you will find the ball suddenly moving very quickly and will need to roll with it.

Making it a reality

We'd all love time to really let an idea come together naturally. We'd love time to build the perfect crew that works like a family unit, and we'd love to wait for the perfect locations and casting to come our way. But if that's the kind of thing you're expecting to happen, then think again. The music industry works fast, and by fast, I mean

FAST. Whilst you are working on the video for the current single, they will already be lining up the next single and release date. Musicians know that they have a limited window with the audience and speed is essential in making money successfully.

In most cases, once your idea is approved you will find yourself shooting in less than ten days. That's not a lot of time to figure out your budget, location, cast and crew. The best advice is to make sure that most of this is already in place when you are making the pitch. If the budget for the video is only £3,000 then don't pitch a concept that requires a trip to Hawaii and the use of an active volcano. Make your pitch in accordance with your budget. Immediately figure out your day rate and let the record label know that this is the amount of budget that will be going to you.

Then make sure you can stretch





whatever is left to encapsulate the concept. Do you need lighting? Do you need more than one camera? Who is going to operate the camera? How much will the location and actors cost? Who is going to edit the video? All of these things will cost money, so if you don't have money, make sure you can either do it yourself, or that the concept allows you to avoid any additional costs. Try to pick a crew of people you know and trust, because you will likely only have a day to shoot, so you'll need to be efficient to get it all done. And don't worry if this all falls apart on the first video, it's

bound to.

Keep refining your team and your pitches until they are all part of a smooth machine, which you know can get the job done in any circumstances. Ultimately, the label won't blame the crew or the location if the video turns out bad. they will blame you. Learn from your mistakes on every video you do, so that when you eventually make it to directing that Kanye West video, nothing can faze you.

Give your video the best chance

You should always take into consideration where the music



video is intended for before you begin. This is a very different world we live in compared to eight years ago. These days, a lot of labels care far more about a viral reaction on YouTube than they do to the video being playlisted on TV. Ask the label and musicians what they are hoping for. Most of the time the answer is both. But to some labels TV play is essential, and if this is the case you will need to follow the TV guidelines carefully. No swear words, scenes of a sexual reference or flashing imagery. Your video will need to pass the Harding Test to qualify for TV (this test determines if the video is suitable for people with epilepsy to watch).

If your video breaks these rules it will not get any airtime and the label will be very unhappy with you. If the label is more interested in YouTube hits though, and has no intention of the video going to TV, then you have a lot more freedom to play with some themes and ideas you wouldn't normally get away with. Recently, I made a



post-apocalyptic video that ends in cannibalism and it's great for YouTube, but not the kind of thing MTV would play at teatime. Just make sure you get all of the facts from the record label before you begin on the project.

Vision vs. business

Let's stop and face a few facts at this point. As a filmmaker, your goal is to be respected and sought after for the pieces that you make. This is your end goal.







To reach this point though, you are going to have to prove yourself and, as I mentioned earlier, this will require compromise. When you are making a music video, although most directors would like

to believe otherwise, the audience will not see you when they watch the video, they will believe it represents the views and opinions of the musician. Therefore, you should take on board their







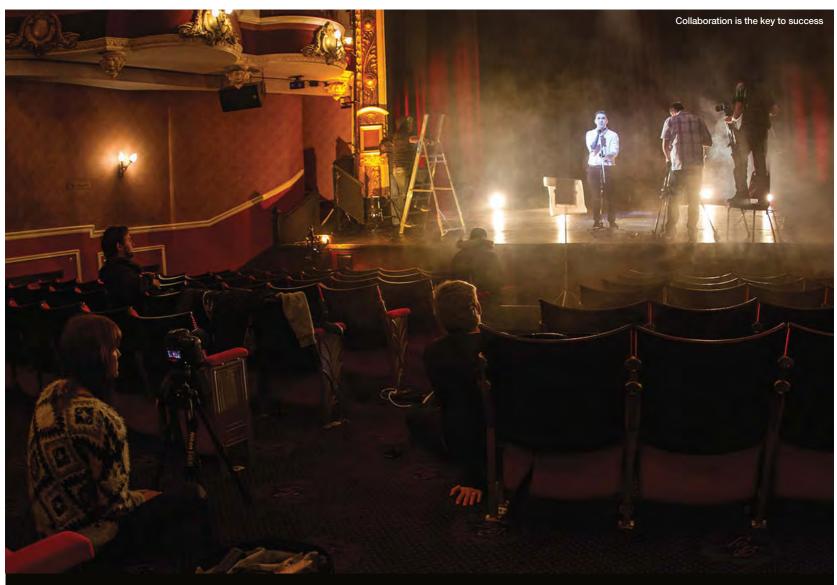
perspective on what you are doing. They may morally object to your concept, or they may feel that the tone you are aiming for doesn't represent them as a personality. If you push on ahead with the concept anyway, ignoring their thoughts or feelings, when you hand the video in I can guarantee you are in for the biggest headache of your career. Music

videos have to be a collaboration between you and the musician.

The music industry is a lot like any other, in that all the musicians talk to each other. If you have been compassionate and created a piece that the musician truly loves, then they will recommend you to other musicians and you will get more work. More work leads to more money and that, ultimately, means you won't have to go back to working in Starbucks and can keep this dream of yours alive. To be successful you need to be able to play the game, and that requires you to shed any totalitarian personality traits and embrace a collaborative attitude. Remember. even James Cameron started out directing Piranha 2 to prove he could work well with others.

In summary

It's not easy to get noticed these days, and with cameras making huge technological leaps every year, it's becoming an increasingly saturated arena to work within. But



this is also a good thing, because it means if you are going to cut it then you must train yourself to be the best you can be, to learn every aspect of production so that you can navigate small budgets and pull off mini miracles. The music industry is dog-eat-dog and if you find that you don't have the stomach for it, then perhaps filmmaking as a career isn't right for you.

If, on the other hand, you find that the competitive nature of it all and the speed at which you

are required to move motivates you and pushes you creatively, then it certainly bodes well for your wider career as a feature filmmaker. It's a long old race to the finish line and we are all in it together, so my final piece of advice would be this; collaboration is the key to success, so play nicely with others and you'll do just fine.

To keep up to date with Tom Paton's blog you can follow him on Twitter @TPAKproductions or visit www.tpakproductions.com ■













On Friday last week, I headed to the garden to enjoy a few moments of sun during a quick break in the day's editing schedule, marvelling how one short film, planned and executed to completion in just two months, had turned into a truly global operation. From my London office/bedroom, in a morning, I was able to travel to Wales to watch a woolly mammoth being brought to life with 3D technology, then take a trip across the pacific to New Zealand and see a cavewoman transport herself from an Ice Age into a spotless kitchen. I then finished off by zooming back to Europe and Dublin to fill in my fellow producer Jassa Ahluwalia with the latest updates. It's mind-blowing how instant overseas communication is now possible. With modern technology there's no longer a distance barrier and teams can be chosen based on talent rather than location. Of course. there were challenges: there were days of horror when the internet suddenly became temperamental, or bandwidth ran out. Regardless, this film would not have been possible without technology and is a great example of modern filmmaking!

The back story

I'm Sebastian Solberg, director, producer and editor of the project. I've been making movies since I was nine years old; although 'movies' might be a debatable term for 'reinacting my favourite James Bond and Austin Powers scenes with friends in the back garden'. I became obsessed with filmmaking. Much to the despair of some of my schoolteachers, it took precedence over anything and everything else. But, I was lucky



enough to grow up with a lot of support for what I was doing.

In no time at all, I found myself in a bedroom in South London, a good thirteen years' worth of filmmaking experience behind me, staring at the Virgin Media Shorts web page. I'd been thinking about my previous experience with VMS - last year I worked on one of the shortlisted films, The Plotters, as a cinematographer for the Guerrier brothers. The film had got such great exposure and feedback from the VMS, which proved to be a fantastic launching pad for the talent behind it. It made me want to put my own stamp on the competition as a director.

I've always loved making short films. For me, they've been a chance to make mistakes and learn the craft without putting huge amounts of other people's money at risk. They're a great film school.

The other huge benefit is that, for a short film, it's possible to produce a very high quality result on a very small budget. On Modern Man, we asked for volunteers who would be willing to take a day out to shoot with us - just one day meant we were able to get a high standard of cast and crew on board.

Sebastian Solberg directs

Deciding on the concept

The process of finding a concept I was happy with took a lot of thought. I spoke to close friends and family about Charlie Chaplaintype silent films, about having parallel-running time periods and windows into other worlds... nothing clicked. I was looking for simplicity. My last filmmaking experience had been so frustrating, full of difficult and wrong decisions that made it disheartening. So, this time, I wanted to make this film fun, quirky and a little bit ridiculous. My



first thought was how could I make a fun, crazy film in a kitchen? Add time travel!

I find that when the right idea comes to me, everything starts falling into place. An image of a cavewoman facing-off to a very posh, clean person came to mind and instantly made me laugh out loud - I had to do it! I wanted an amazing writer to breathe life into the concept, so emailed Simon Guerrier pitching the idea, and

asked if he'd write it. We met the next day and, after two hours, we had a clear structure that I absolutely loved - and it hasn't actually changed since that first meeting. Over the next few weeks the script went through five revisions, with input from lots of different people. It was very exciting to see Simon work his magic on it.

Careful planning

In Modern Man, the first person to be cast was the cavewoman played by Ramanique Ahluwalia. I'd worked with Romy before, and as soon as the initial idea came to mind I knew she would be perfect for the role. I was

Next was our Rupert. Sadly, a week before filming, job clashes meant our actor for 'Rupert' wasn't able to do the film. It was a blow for the whole production team, who had to put lots on hold to go into overdrive to find the right person for the job. I saw so many headshots that day! Jassa and Simon were throwing suggestions that didn't quite fit. Three days before the shoot, Jassa suggested Sean Knopp. As soon as I saw his showreel, I knew he was perfect for the part and we sent him the script

her before her move to New York!

While the production team was working hard on finding the faces of the film, we were also putting together a crew that was unbelievably high-calibre. Our

within minutes. He loved it, and

thankfully said yes!

first find was a great costume designer, who blew my mind with her great work on the cavewoman costume with such a tiny budget. Without her, and our make-up designer, the movie would never have achieved such visual authenticity. It goes to show how important these departments are, and on small productions they are the key to lifting the film to a higher level.

Our art department was a funny team, one being a meticulous planner and the other a last-minute wonder. The really key prop in Modern Man was the remote and it had to be perfect. Our production designer created a version that was originally drastically different to what ended up in the film - the beautiful yet half-finished work of art had to be replaced at 5pm the night before the shoot! It was a moment of sickening nerves







as the very real possibility of not having the key prop presented itself. Despite my worries, as you can see from the film, the new remote was born of genius lastminute design.

The right people

On all my films, I've always worked by the same motto: unless I can find someone miles better than me. I'll do the jobs myself. So I've shot most of my movies myself, simply because I couldn't find anyone I trusted enough

to deliver such a huge part of the film. For Modern Man, I had toyed with the idea of asking someone insanely good like, oh, I don't know, someone who's worked on BBC's Merlin and Doctor Who,

but thought there'd be no way someone that in-demand would be free. It was amazing luck that. as I trawled through my daily Facebook check, I noticed that Dale McCready - someone who actually does fit those credentials - was on holiday! Another email flew out into cyberspace, and within a day, I was on the phone to him discussing the visual effects and how we were going to shoot the movie. I don't think Dale actually ever said the word 'yes', but after that conversation

I had to pinch myself because our film suddenly had a world-class cinematographer on board.

Stunt Coordinator Dani Biernat rehearsing with the cast

And, with world-class talent comes world-class equipment. When the email came through asking me whether I would



I had to pinch myself because our film suddenly had a world-class cinematographer on board



credits like The Hobbit. Marvel's The Avengers and James Bond: Skyfall), that's when the production got big. And budget blew up. Luckily, we were able to get some brilliant deals with the companies we hired equipment from - Take 2 and Kitroom Monkey - and even managed to hire a beautiful set of anamorphic (wide screen) lenses to go with the Arri Alexa for the day, which

As if continuing on the Skyfall theme, we found a really fun, brilliant stunt co-ordinator in the shape of Dani Biernat, who just happened to have won an award for her work on the James Bond film. It's important on any film to keep the actors safe, and after due consideration, it became clear that we just weren't happy with what we would be asking the

actors to do - at least not without professional advice. Dani was instrumental in keeping the big kitchen fight safe and interesting, and also in keeping everyone highly entertained with stories of times she had to fall down stairs, or roll cars, or slide motorbikes under vehicles!

The night before the shoot I was so nervous, waking up really early and struggling to sleep because of the excitement. It's a story I think many directors know. That morning I played the film a few times in my head, so I knew exactly which shots I wanted and how the film was going to play out. It was such a proud and rewarding day to finally see everything

I played the film a few times in my head, so I knew which shots I wanted and how the film was going to play out





coming together and all those highly talented people bringing Modern Man to life. I had to pinch myself throughout the day because this was what I'd been dreaming about since I was nine and it was finally happening. I couldn't believe it.

Staying on track

Despite shooting a staggering 42 slates in one day, the filming ran like clockwork, which is a tribute to our first AD. The actors nailed their performances and kept it really light-hearted and fun. The

crew were very on the ball with getting things done as quickly and efficiently as possible so we could wrap without overrunning too much. What was amazing was that when Dale came on board, the costume, set and everything was already at his very professional level. All credit to the whole team; everything was at a world class standard. The end of the shoot segued into the second and arguably most nerve-wracking part of the project: post-production. I'll be honest - the first day was

a nightmare. We were shooting at 2K high-res, which meant that the whole post production workflow was something beyond what Jassa or myself had ever worked with before. We spent a lot of time researching and talking with other editors about the best way to work with the footage. I worked with Premier Pro, which was great but unfamiliar territory on things like trying to get aspect ratios (whether the image is square or rectangle) from the Arri Alexa footage imported properly. It was a slow start, but after that it was so exciting to finally assemble the movie!

Fine-tuning the edit is always

the hardest and most time consuming part, and I always find it important to get input from as many people as possible. With such a VFX-heavy film, the two weeks we had before picture lock were probably the most sleepless nights for everyone involved. The rough cut was full of pre-viz scenes and without sound, which made it very difficult for anyone I showed it to imagine the whole picture. I sent it to some of the crew members for feedback anyway, but the overwhelming comment was 'there's a lot left to do'. This was one week before the film was due, and we still had pick-up shots to film. Argh!

The last two days before the deadline was mental! We were creating the soundscape of the movie with sound design, bringing colour to the short with the grade and applying the finishing touches to the Ice Age with the VFX's. Our post-production team worked throughout the night to finish everything in time and, thanks to them, we managed to hand in the completed film three hours before the deadline! Phew, it was tight.

We're now working hard to get the film in cinemas. Voting started on Monday 22nd July and lasted through to Friday 27th July. So, please watch, like and share with the world. Modern Man: www. tinyurl.com/ModernManFilm.

For more updates check out www.twitter.com/modernmanfilm www.sebastiansolberg.com Article written by Sebastian Solberg and Katya Rogers



Producer and director Michael Cristian Greene tells Digital FilmMaker about how his vision for a global production company has steadily fallen into place



MSQUARE Productions was founded by producer and director Michael Cristian Greene along with producer/ art director Mia-Danica Jamora, in an effort to combine effortless style with captivating story lines. This dynamic duo is an artistic collaboration between themselves and their team. With offices in Los Angeles, California and Sydney, Australia, MSQUARE Productions offers film and commercial production worldwide. Since starting MSQUARE Productions in 2011, the pair have gone on to produce commercials and are now in the final stages of postproduction for two highly-anticipated short films - The Alpha System and

Beating the odds

Isobel and The Patissier.

Creating an epic fantasy/adventure film like The Alpha System when studio execs said it couldn't be done was a challenge. I was turned down by studios who said I couldn't afford to film on their sound stage. Universal was going to charge me \$20k a day to film on their European lot. However, I didn't give up, and persisted in approaching other landowners, which ended up awarding me with some of the most amazing shooting locations I could have ever imagined.

The film relies heavily on VFX, but I knew that when going into this production when I first wrote the film. After being told the short film was too VFX ambitious by many others. we found artists who believed in it and who came on board and joined together, despite their differences in language, countries, time zones, and the daunting amount of work. It's been a difficult journey, but an amazing

one. Having Mia-Danica Jamora as our Production Designer, Amy Child as our Post-Prod Coordinator and David Law as our VFX Supervisor has made all the difference in getting TAS accomplished in the post stages.



Visualise it

As a filmmaker, it's critical to visualise the outcome of a film before shooting it, while shooting it, and carrying that vision into post. Prior to shooting, it was important to have a distinct vision of how the film would turn out in the end. Remember that your decisions early on will affect the resulting outcome. I suggest following your gut instinct, it never lies. If you begin telling a story and you give yourself goosebumps, you're probably going to have the same effect on those who've iust heard it for the first time.

Making an epic fantasy/adventure movie with otherworld landscapes, vehicles, magic and creatures, then tying it all together with a multilayer story is extremely difficult to

The Alpha System

www.alphasystemmovie.com The Alpha System is a live-action, fantasy short film. The story follows Nova Redcloud, a young adventurer who has set out to learn more about his past. During his journey, Nova saves a young girl, Oliviana, from a group of Alpha Soldiers, and together they barely escape the fallen city of Nordreth. As they travel together, Oliviana finds herself falling for this stranger, intrigued by his past. Nova finds himself recalling memories of his childhood, legends of a power known as

'Ethra' that his father use to tell him about and the girl he loved. Genesis, who died in his arms. The memories of Genesis and

the day she died on the battlefield haunt him still, becoming more prolific as he spends his time journeying with Oliviana. During their travels, Nova and Oliviana are confronted by a band of creatures known as 'Draths'. Fighting for their lives, the two companions make their way out of battle and travel to the nearest town. Upon reaching their next safe-haven, they find things are much different than they expected. A twist of fate occurs, when Nova and Oliviana are ambushed and forced to confront their worst fears. The Alpha System runs deeper than they could ever imagine. Oliviana fights for her life and must avenge her past, while Nova is left with the darkening realisation: to save what he loves most, he must embrace The Alpha System.



Isobel & The Patissier

www. is obeland the patissier.com

Isobel & The Patissier is a film about a young boy, who falls in love with the young girl that frequents his bakery. It is a story about love, hope, and determination. Though he's a little bit clumsy and awkward, Sebastian is a promising Patissier who has a talent for creating the most delicious croissants and baked goods in all of Maison Chaleureuse. The small town bakery is often flooded with the locals and, as most small regional French towns would have it, everyone knows everyone else. Well, almost.

One day, a young French girl by the name of Isobel visits Sebastien's Patiserrie. His heart skips a beat when their eyes meet. He forgets himself. Sebastian is in love. However, before he musters the chance to talk to her, she leaves. After her initial visit, Isobel arrives at the bakery every day that week, but Sebastien constantly misses his chance to talk to her. Deciding that it's time to take control of his fate, Sebastien resolves to do whatever he can to steal a moment with Isobel and tell her how he feels. But, as we all know, life has its surprises and nothing ever really goes quite as planned.



accomplish as an indie short filmmaker. It is very rare to find a short film that has all the above and each area has been done well at the same time. However, at the end of the day, you have to make the movie that means something to you. TAS has been a work in progress for 2 years, and we're making it happen despite the multitude of obstacles that have come our way.

A new way forward

The evolution of the digital filmmaker environment has been dramatic. Just as Kubrick revolutionised Science-Fiction and space in his films, with 2001 A Space Odyssey the core example, recent technology has given the digital filmmaker the ability to make their dreams come to life. With today's technology, if you can visualise it, you can create it...and without relying on the 100+ millions of dollars that it used to cost. Lord of the Rings cost \$281 million to make (the trilogy), and though you might not be able to make LOTR,

you can definitely make a stunning film with creative planning, the right tools, dedication, and a good team. If you really want to make it, you will.

Don't worry too much about following the 'rules' of filmmaking either. Work with what you have and don't be afraid of colouring 'outside of the lines'. There are no real rules to this thing called filmmaking, but do keep in mind who your audience will be, and have a good understanding of filmmaking basics, so that you have a foundation to 'cheat' from if need be.



Getting dirty

If you're wanting to make a short film, especially if it's going to be an ambitious one, be ready to get dirty. I had to wear all manner of hats at one stage or another on TAS, lending a hand when and where needed. You're often fighting against some major obstacle be it time, budget, resources, daylight and all the rest of it and if you reckon you'll be able to kick back in your directors chair and let everyone else do the rest, you might be sorely disappointed. Indie filmmaking is all about teamwork. I had to help my art director build the vehicle in TAS, called the Hydracarriage.



What does a Hydracarriage look like you might ask? Well, it's a boat-like vessel that levitates above ground using a magnetic driven pressure system. In TAS there's no electricity, so most of the city and devices run off of natural resources, including magnets. To build this Hydracarriage, we had to literally find scrap wood, metal, and other random pieces. From there, we did a lot of research on medieval inventions, modern technology, and magnets.

I've always had a fascination with magnets and their unseen properties, so I incorporated it into the film in a way that people could relate to and to keep some of the elements of 'their world' grounded and similar to ours.

Equipment requirements

We shot the entire short film of The Alpha System on dual Canon 5D MKII DSLR cameras using Zeiss Prime lenses. We also had H4n recorders, dolly sliders, a 24ft crane, and a steadicam. What's more, everyone brought their A-game, everyday, no matter how long the days were. We might not have had Alexa's to shoot on, but the two 5D's gave us the versatility and speed we needed to accomplish everything in the amount of time we had. They're amazing cameras and their quick workflow and usage makes them the perfect medium to shoot an ambitious epic film on.





Bringing Paris to Sydney

Mia-Danica Jamora and I joined forces to do our recent short film, romantic comedy Isobel & The Patissier. We met on The Alpha System and have worked together ever since. From the beginning of The Alpha System, we had certain creative differences, which has been great because it has forced us to grow and think outside of our own boxes. When Edana Isobel Jamora brought the IATP script to us, we saw an opportunity to

film it in Sydney, Australia. Sydney has a lot of potential, with its indie filmmakers, its variety of shooting locations, the creative culture (musicians and actors alike), and the potential for growth in the local indie film industry. So we decided to bring Paris to Sydney.

We wanted to do this short film as one would do a feature and knew if we really wanted to bring Paris to Sydney, it would take a lot of work, a good team of filmmakers, preparation, and persistence. We brought on

Amy Child as our production coordinator and she's helped us from pre-to-post. We wanted to keep the crew all Sydney-based, so we reached out and brought on an amazing team, which started out as 7 crew members, and by the time we were in principle photography we had gathered a talented crew of 65. We wanted to shoot on some of the best digital equipment out there, so Mia-Danica, Amy and myself reached out to gain funding.

Although we gained some financial support, we didn't have enough funds to shoot on the camera and lens of choice - a RED Epic with Cooke lenses; (and though we could have filmed on our DSLRs, we really wanted to shoot this film on a RED). I personally love Zeiss lenses, but for this film, we wanted that bell curve DOF look that only Cooke can bring to a lens indistinguishably. So we put our vision down on paper, our purpose, who was involved and what we really wanted. Basically a 'wish list' and we reached out to world-reknowned leading motionpicture camera giant, Panavision. They believed in us and what we were doing and came on-board as our major sponsor. We ended up shooting Isobel & The Patissier on a RED MX with Cooke S4 Lenses.

Roll with the punches

From day one, till the very moment that I'm relating all this, there's been one thing after the next. Murphy was a genius when he stated 'whatever can go wrong, will go wrong.' That's not to say that as a digital filmmaker, you won't have some seamless days of production...but they're few and far between and when you do have them, it will feel like you're in the Twilight Zone. Filmmaking is all about rolling with the punches, you have to be ready

The faster you make mistakes and learn from them, then the quicker you'll be on your way to success



removed paint from all twenty of the windows. Could we have given up? Yes. Did we? No sir. Be ready to roll with the punches, 'cause they'll come when you least expect them.

What's Next for **MSQUARE?**

With both short films finishing up post-production, we plan to enter them simultaneously into film festivals worldwide, including some of the heavyweights, such as Sundance. The good thing is that both films are completely different from each other and target a different audience, so we hope to capture viewers of all ages, backgrounds, and interests. We don't plan to stop there however, as we would love to take things to the next level. The Alpha System was written as a prologue to a full feature trilogy, so we plan on opening that as and when the time is right. We look forward to continuing to meet other amazing filmmakers throughout our journey in the months to come. ■

for the unexpected. On Isobel & The Patissier, we desperately searched for the right location for the patisserie, and though we gave ourselves months in advance, we still didn't have the 'right' location locked in until two weeks out from when we were supposed to start shooting. There just aren't many patisseries sitting around in Sydney that will allow you to take over and stop business so you can shoot your short film. So, we finally locked in an old closed-down bar that was filled with rubbish, had holes in the walls, the windows were painted over, and had a tree growing in the middle of it.

Again, you have to roll with the punches. For an indie filmmaker, finding a location that fits the bill for your film, even with all the above ailments, is like finding gold. We had two weeks filled with all the preparation and attention that a good film needs prior to principal photography, and now we had to turn this run down old bar into a beautiful, warm, French patisserie filled with delicious baked goods. Mia-Danica, Amy, Amy's husband Mark and myself spent three 18-hour days that weekend pulling off a renovation marathon. We gutted it out, patched all the holes in the walls, replaced part of the ceiling, built a wall (yes, we had to build a wall), concreted areas and

Michael Cristian Greene offers his own tips for the digital filmmaker

1. Make mistakes

The faster you make them and learn from them, then the quicker you'll be on your way to success. Oscar Wilde once said: "Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes." So get out there, don't be afraid of making the mistakes while you're starting out - in fact, get them all out of vour system. You'll appreciate it later when vou've learned from your mistakes in your own time, instead of the million dollar production you're currently working on.

2. Embrace the fear of failure

I grew up with Raiders of the Lost Ark as one of my most memorable childhood films, and gained further appreciation of Spielberg throughout the years, especially from his masterpiece Schindler's List. However, one thing stuck with me as a film lover and filmmaker more than watching those pictures, and it was watching an old interview of him. In the interview, Speilberg discussed how he grew up afraid of everything, and it was eventually through that fear that he was able to successfully direct major motion pictures. He mentioned that he does not take on a film unless he fears there's a good chance of the production failing...Why you may ask? Because it makes a person adapt and grow. I've taken that to heart in my productions, (see ambitious short film The Alpha System mentioned earlier), and I know first-handedly how, when you're forced to make it work, and failure's not an option, the adrenaline and creativity will flow out of you like you never would have imagined. So, the next time you look at the overall production and you begin to doubt or fear how it can be done - embrace it. It might end up becoming your masterpiece.

3. Less is more

I hate to admit it, but one of the rules of thumb when it comes to directing your film, is that more often than not you'll end up having to get rid of your favourite piece/shot/moment of the film. As

a filmmaker, and this goes for everyone else out there - actors, cinematographers and all the rest of it - you will always have one part of the film that you really, really want to perfect. It could be that amazing dolly shot that spans the whole sunset, or the cinematic jib shot that took you two hours to get right. Whatever it is, you'll most likely watch it in post and realise that it doesn't necessarily carry the story forward. That's what great films are all about, not just beautiful pictures, but an amazing story. It's a hard thing to let go of that favourite shot, but if it doesn't carry your story forward, it might just be the shot that removes your audience from the magic of being 'lost' in your movie.

www.msquareproductions.com





our work seen by as many people as we could, and developing a CV of films we hoped would get us a foothold in the film industry. For this feature, we're going to take you inside Bloody Cuts to share our experience on how we created the series, why we did it the way we did, and the joys of filmmaking on a low-budget.

Creating the series

The Bloody Cuts team and series grew out of an entry for the Sci-Fi London 48-Hour Film Challenge, where we'd been close to winning with our 5-minute film 2 Years of Summer. Inspired by the quality of the final piece, and the way the whole team had banded together,

series creator and producer Ben Franklin felt we should continue to use our weekends to try and produce more quality short films.

Horror was a genre we all enjoyed and has traditionally always been associated with lowbudget filmmaking, so it seemed an obvious route to go and one

which would sit comfortably as short form entertainment for a YouTube audience. Ben was joined by fellow producer Anthony Melton, as well as director of photography Jonny Franklin, and they set about pulling together the team, creating the website and brand, and building the beginnings of what would be a very full-on but rewarding experience.

series as cheaply as possible, with team members working for free and assisted by sponsors such as Millennium FX, who graciously provide the fantastic make-up and prosthetics seen in our films. We've also spent time approaching equipment companies for sponsorship, used our contacts in the industry and networked with other filmmakers. The budget for our films initially came from our own pockets, but as our ambitions have grown

We've managed to make the

Pre-production

monster to life!

A typical Bloody Cuts episode usually takes around 3 months to plan and prepare before the shoot. As our series has developed we've taken more time on the planning of the films, having learnt lessons from the previous entries. We've always worked as professionally as possible over the aspects of production, taking time to hone scripts over numerous drafts, creating storyboards and shot-lists, maps of locations and making sure the whole team has everything they need for the shoot.

we've used crowdfunding sites, such

as IndieGoGo and Kickstarter to

Most recently, we raised over

with fans and friends donating to

£3,250 for our last film Don't Move.

make it our most spectacular horror

short yet. The fundraising aspect of

the process has been the hardest

work, but it's been vital to keeping

the series afloat. The 'film-school'

ethos of Bloody Cuts means we use

the series as an opportunity to train

ourselves in all areas of production,

right through to the marketing. We've

all learnt an immense amount about

filmmaking and so we'll be telling you

about exactly what goes into bring this

successfully fund our films.

As our team has grown, more people have been involved in all areas of the production - Don't Move had almost 40 crew members for example - so it's important to make sure everyone is confident in their roles and what we're trying to achieve. This planning doesn't just involve the film itself, but the logistics too. Areas like catering, transportation and accommodation are vital, and are some of the best ways to keep a non-paid crew happy.

Planning in pre-production is also vital when we shoot on low-budgets; we need to find locations, props and other elements as cheaply as possible and, in some cases, for free. With locations being the costliest factor we spend a lot of time scouting for places we can film that won't break the bank, but ones which also won't sacrifice the quality of the overall production.

Shooting

With the majority of the Bloody Cuts team working or studying full-time, our films are traditionally shot over a single weekend. We've used Norfolk as a base for the bulk of our output so far,

Horror was a genre we all enjoyed and has traditionally always been associated with low**budget filmmaking**



staying around King's Lynn where friends and family are based. This means we can typically cut costs on transport and accommodation for the team and actors.

With crew members working in varying fields of filmmaking, we've had access to cameras and equipment that may be above what the usual no-budget filmmaker could get their hands on. A lot of this has come down to making contact with equipment and hire companies, informing them about our work and asking for sponsorship (in return for on-screen credits).

So far, our camera team has had the opportunity to shoot on RED Epic, Arri Alexa and a number of DSLRs, which has been a great learning experience. All cameras have their advantages and disadvantages, and in the case of the RED Epic, the 4K workflow can be very difficult when you're not a professional post-production house. Although we have a good set-up at home, rendering intensive media can be a system drain, and large files make working with multiple Visual FX artists tricky.

Post-production

As our films have grown in scope, we've spent more and more time on the post-production process. The team who work on the back-end of the film has grown dramatically over the series; we now use a composer, a colourist, sound mixer/foley and, as mentioned, a small number of Visual FX artists.

We've used multiple NLE's on our films, including Final Cut 7, Final Cut X and Adobe Premiere Pro. After Effects has also been key to achieving over 200 VFX shots that we've had to complete through the 8 series, from simple image fixes (painting out stray objects) to creating the smoky apparition effects as seen in Don't Move.

Releasing the film

Once the final cut is locked, it's time to release a new horror upon the world. During the post-production process we always try and build a buzz for a new episode. We've always set a specific release date for our films, making sure we both tease and excite fans with glimpses of what awaits them next. This allows us to promote the film, much like a big budget feature, and also create anticipation for the next slice of Bloody Cuts. We announce the title through our website and then via Twitter and



Facebook, sending out press releases to the websites and magazines that hav covered our work before. We've also focused on creating short teasers and a trailer for each new film to promote them beforehand. This all takes extra work, but it's worthwhile to make people aware of the new

On the release day we go all guns blazing and Tweet, Facebook and promote the film as much as possible. This aspect of the online release is really rewarding because we, as filmmakers, can get a very immediate reaction to our work, which makes it incredibly worthwhile. The first 24/48hrs of the films release, much like a large

box office feature film, will usually indicate its overall success. It's the time when most reviews will come in. and the audience interest will peak the largest. The exception to this rule might be when a Vimeo 'Staff Pick' is earned, or a popular website such as io9.com writes up a piece on the film; these circumstances, especially when combined, can send the film 'viral'.

A good tip if you think your film is good enough for a 'Staff Pick' on Vimeo is to tell them in the 'Shout Box' on their webpage, which is where they tend to scan most of the time for new exciting content. If they spot your film, and it meets their quality criteria, you're very likely to be in with a chance of being featured.













Promoting Bloody Cuts

Our decision to release the series online for free seemed like a no-brainer, so we created a great looking website to showcase our work, as well as using obvious channels like YouTube and Vimeo. Without a budget for marketing, Bloody Cuts has grown through the promotion we do via Twitter and Facebook, as well as the exposure we've continuously sought through many other promotional channels such as film sites, podcasts/radio and blogs. The key to coming up with a web series that will find the desired attention doesn't just come down to the content that's being provided, but also how much is done to ensure it gets found in the first place. YouTube and Vimeo are flooded with an incredible amount of material, both awful and brilliant, and to stand out in a crowded market is almost impossible.



The team at Bloody Cuts want our films to be seen by anyone with a passing interest, even if they aren't a fan of horror. And we felt that if we could create short form, scary entertainment that it would appeal to YouTube viewers looking for a quick fix. And, because our series isn't made in any kind of chronological order, a viewer can jump in at any point and watch as many or as little of the other films as they like. Our audience started small and has grown with each successive film, and we're continuously finding new fans who are viewing our back catalogue for the first time, even now. We began by researching the many horror and film websites that we thought might be interested in featuring our work and contacted them via email. Over the 8

films, this list of contacts has grown rapidly, and it's now much easier for us to achieve same day exposure when we release new content. We've always crafted press releases and accompanying promotional material and treated our marketing as professionally as possible. From all of this, we've gained regular coverage on some of the biggest film websites like Dread Central, Fangoria, Film School Rejects and Ain't It Cool News. Positive reviews from well respected genre sites such as these gave our films a real boost in terms of views and fanbase, and have lent much credibility to our cause.

Hard work pays off

In many ways, promoting the series can be as intensive as actually making the films, but without this, our hard work would go unnoticed. With the growth in social networking it's so much easier to network and communicate with filmmakers and fans from around the world. We've also found that featuring regular content, whether it's 'Behind-the-Scenes' videos and photos, or reviews of our films, can be a great way of retaining an audience. Our website too, at www.bloodycuts. co.uk, has a fantastic, thriving audience who regularly return for news updates and blog articles.

In fact, we think that, much like a YouTube channel and good social networking presence, our own website is essential. Not only does it define the brand, it gives a central area to contain all that relates to our web series. It's an opportunity to promote sponsors, allow exposure for the crew, and thank supporters and fans who've helped to grow the series from the first day. It's



also an excellent portal for selling merchandise, with the sale of branded t-shirts and our soonto-be released Blu-ray helping to draw in extra funds for the development of new and original content.

Even though we have very much focused our films towards web release only, as the series has developed we've also been asked to submit our work to horror film festivals and have since had our work shown in the US, Canada and around the world. The cost of entering multiple film festivals can become expensive, and is often beyond our means, but we've found on occasions that it's been a good way to promote our work further, and pick up competition

Our camera team has had the opportunity to shoot on RED Epic, Arri Alexa and a number of DSLRs

prize money too. And, as much as we love the immediacy of the web, the experience of being in attendance of a live screening of one of our films is hugely rewarding. It's somewhat ironic that where we decided initially against entering festivals, because of the success we've had, we're now being asked to appear in them!

The future

With 5 more episodes to make, there's still much more to come from Bloody Cuts. However, due to the most recent success of our shorts, we've found that industry attention both here and abroad has sparked a few very interesting projects that could temporarily divert our attentions. Officially we're 'in development' with a Hollywood producer on a feature-length version of one of our shorts, and we're also exploring the possibility of shooting a film in the UK that we're pursuing private funding for.

These and the many other

opportunities that are opening for us has really come down to the passion and commitment we've shown throughout. We operate it pretty much as a second job, and the hard work is now really starting to pay off; we're incredibly excited about taking our brand of horror to an even wider audience.

In the short term, our fantasticlooking first season Blu-ray/ DVD will be available to buy through our website in August, which contains all 8 episodes and almost 3 hours of special features. It's been great to see that come together as a highdefinition package, especially considering that previously, viewers could only see the films in their compressed web format. We're all incredibly proud to present the films in this brand new package, and as is the nature of this non-profit making venture, we hope the funds can help us to generate even more films for us and our audience to enjoy in the future. ■





Douglas McFarlane takes an inside look at Google and finds some potential options for aspiring filmmakers... AND THE FUTURE OF FILMMAKING

If you've been walking around the London underground network recently, you won't have failed to notice the promotional work for the new Owen Wilson/Vince Vaughn movie, The Internship. The staff at Google are beng bombarded by internal emails and management cascades are informing workers it's a must see film. Why? Well, it amounts to a two-hour advert for Google. As Owen and Vaughn's characters realise their sales world has come to an end because the "world is computers now", they decide to attempt to get an internship in the weird and wonderful world of Google, where "5% of you will get a full-time position. The other 95% will not."

At the time of writing, we hadn't seen the movie as it wasn't due to be launched for a week or so, but there were plenty of scenes and trailers on YouTube, all of which prove entertaining enough. "You are shrunk to the height of a nickel and thrown into a blender. Your mass is reduced, so that your density is the same as usual. The blades start moving



in 60 seconds. What do you do?" This is an actual interview question at Google. I know, as I've been reading 'Are You Smart Enough to Work at Google?' by William Poundstone, in a bid to understand Google a bit better.



Mind over matter

Each time I visit their headquarters in London, my brain changes state. The ideas I generate for articles to write, movies to make, projects to start and websites to create - all flow like a stream of consciousness. It all combines to compel me to make them happen. Wow! I'm not sure what their magic is, but it seems to work. The impressive thing is that Google has only really started out on its journey. Formed in 1998, before launching on the stock market in 2004, their rise to the top has been fast and efficient. They are number one in the Forbes World's Most Reputable Companies, with Sony coming a close second.

In April, Larry Page, CEO of Google had this to say: "We had a very strong start to 2013, with \$14.0 billion in revenue, up 31% year-on-year. We are working hard and investing in our products that aim to improve billions of people's lives all around the world." Now, you may think you know Google. We kind of take them for granted these days. There are articles about them in every magazine, every newspaper and, most recently, on the TV news. Theirs is the most visited website online - it's like part of the furniture. However, keep watching. This company has, apparently, just begun to change the world.

Transitional period

So, why should filmmakers be interested in Google? Well, as Steve Spielberg and George Lucas have both been saying



recently, Hollywood is soon to 'implode'. The change that the internet has brought to the world of movies has been significant, with fewer and fewer people going to the cinema, unless it's to watch a \$300million Hollywood blockbuster. This is changing the

risk appetite of Hollywood studios, who'd rather invest in a sure thing, than many risky lower cost films. Lucas has suggested that going out to a movie might end up being like going to watch a theatre production. A rare event, complete with a high price tag attached.

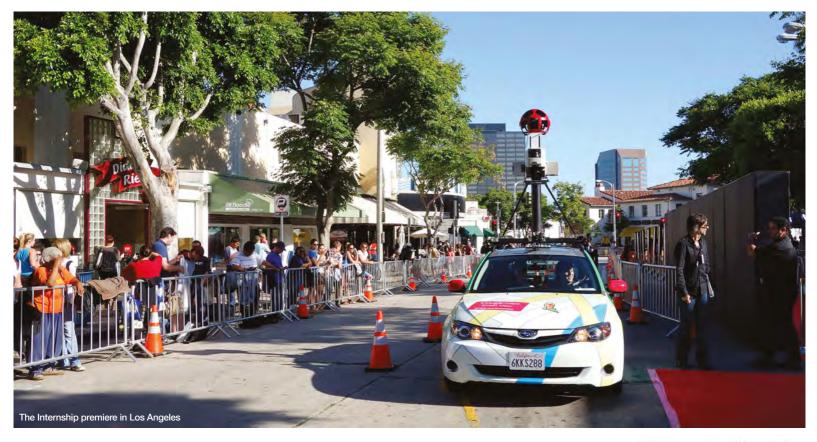
find ways to reach audiences and fund their films. It's time to face the tech and join in, or sit on the sidelines and lose. Knowing Google better is in your interest, and I'd like to mention a few of the things they're doing which filmmakers should have a look at.

On the box

You may not have heard of Google TV. It's just starting to come to the UK, with products being launched by Sony initially, followed by other manufacturers. Effectively, it's building Chrome, YouTube and Google Play into Smart TV's and there will be set-top boxes too,

online viewers, but brings Google right into our living rooms for family viewing on a regular basis. Getting clever with content and turning your films into web series or TV channels that will interest this changing audience could be a potential winning formula for success. Getting a YouTube rental partnership is where the revenue stream will come from, and you can check out the Google pages, which help you do that. Have a look at what Google has done with YouTube Leanback and you'll see its possible potential for web series or channels.

Google Hangouts appear to be



another useful option that could help filmmakers collaborate better. Much like Facetime from Apple, Hangouts allows Google+ users to video conference with others. Google, however, allows one too many, so it's ideal for script reviews, castings, rehearsals and read throughs where you have people in diverse locations, or if you're just looking at how best to reduce travel time and costs.

Glass half full

Last, and by no means least, there's the big one - Google Glass. Will this exciting new technology transform the film world? Perhaps. How can it not? A device that fits on the filmmakers own eyes, is as steady as your own head, and body, and switches on at the command of 'Action'. Well, actually it was, "Okay Glass, record video", when I tried the system out recently, but I'm sure there will be an iCamera app being produced before long in order to add value to the basic out-of-the-box voice control. Amazingly, it even understood my Glaswegian accent, which I felt rather good about at the time.

So, Google Glass could well be the product to watch. Some advanced filmmakers may have an issue with the first version, however. You see, it's only 720p, whereas some smartphones, including the HTC One as an example (pictured right), have already moved onto 1080p. While 720p is ideal for YouTube on a laptop, smartphone or tablet, it may fall short of the quality you want if your film is to be shown on a large screen 1080p TV or in a cinema. So choose your market carefully beforehand.

Google Glass also feels comfortable on the face. I wear glasses occasionally, and my usual Raybans are very comfortable and light. So the experience of wearing Google Glass was familiar to me and I took to them right away. I held my hand up to the right-hand side of my face, stroked the frame to turn it on, and then had a conversation with myself. I interviewed a few people, which was as simple as having a natural conversation. something that is hard to get right when you are holding a camera in front of someone. I spoke, got their responses and, as easy as turning my head to the next person, filmed the next interview. For documentaries or news articles, I thought this system was fantastic. I might still have a separate sound person next to me to get a higher quality of audio, but to engage and connect with people with such ease, is a real



game changer, no doubt.

Clearly, the other aspect of filmmaking using Glass, and one that is shown in many of their advance demonstrations is the first person view of adrenaline-fuelled sports. Skydiving, parachuting, water-skiing and views where the helmet-mounted GoPro currently meets a niche market, for example. For sailing, I use a cheap handy item that fits onto my glasses and keeps them



firm around my head to avoid the things falling into the water. I'd imagine these beauties could be used for those purposes too.

Brighter future

There are already a few filmmakers who have taken to Kickstarter - one example getting twice as much funding as they asked, for their short film called A Love Story, which uses Google Glass. It surely won't be too long before the early adopters have stolen the march on those initial ideas, but it's likely to launch in the UK later this year or early next. Google is working with a few thousand people to trial its features and functions, in order to learn about the barriers to market, fix some initial issues, as well as arming its developer community with the tools to create plenty of exciting apps.

Google is seemingly creating a future that is exciting for independent filmmakers. As a community, we need to make sure we get our creative juices flowing and work out a plan of action to take advantage of this technology. It'll allow us to be at the forefront of the new generation of filmmaking enthusiasts.

Glass Specifications

Fit

- Adjustable nosepads and durable frame fits any face
- Extra nosepads in two sizes

Display

■ High-resolution display is the equivalent of a 25-inch high-definition screen from eight feet away

Camera

■ Photos - 5 MP / Videos - 720p

Audio

■ Bone Conduction Transducer

Connectivity

■ Wifi - 802.11b/g / Bluetooth

Storage

11378

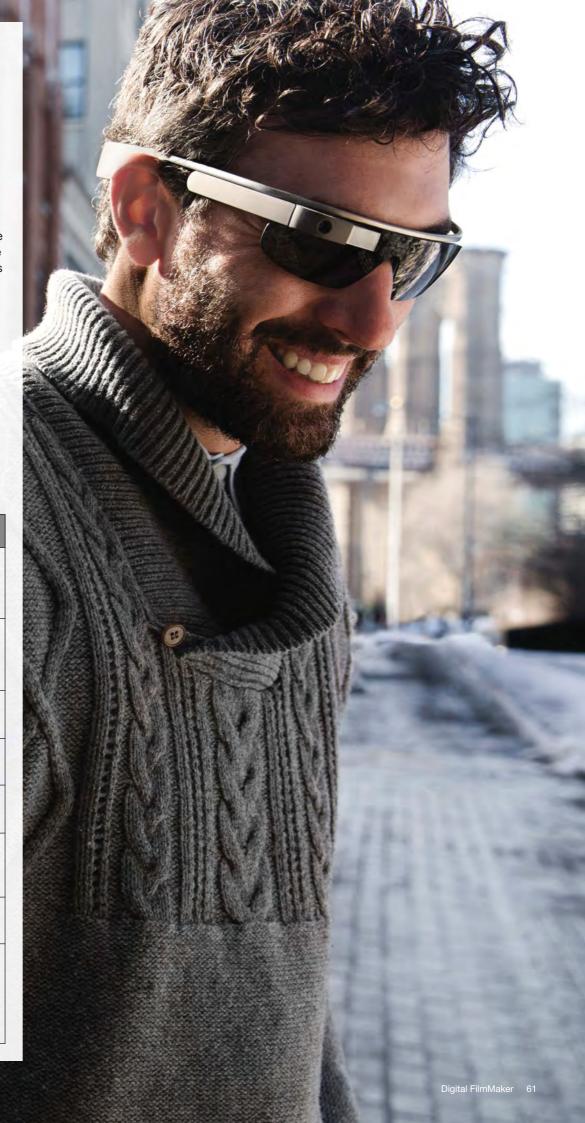
■ 12 GB of usable memory, synced with Google cloud storage. 16 GB Flash total

Charger

■ Included Micro USB cable and charger

Compatability

- Any Bluetooth-capable phone
- The MyGlass companion app requires Android 4.0.3 (Ice Cream Sandwich) or higher. MyGlass enables GPS and SMS messaging



BUYING LENSES ON A BUDGET



Whilst the ability to create professional looking video has become much more accessible over the past few years, many struggle to achieve a certain style or 'cinematic' look within their footage due to the cost factor of high-end, modern lenses. Technological advances have lead to a dizzying quantity of professional optics coming to market, each offering the ability to enhance the quality of your video and make you a



more versatile shooter. However, for the majority of us amateur filmmakers, the option to shop around for that perfect lens, or combination of lenses, is often out of reach. But, this need not be the case. The huge rise in popularity of DSLR cameras has opened up a vast opportunity for cost-saving experimentation while still retaining quality, simply due to the ease of compatibility with older lenses through the quick and straightforward use of adapters.

Back in time

The Canon FD lens mount first appeared with the introduction of the Canon F-1 SLR camera way back in 1971. The FD mount replaced the formerly used bayonet mount, which was popular





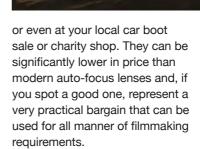
amongst other SLR brands and was an instant hit until production ceased in 1987 with the dawn of the now commonplace EF lenses. At a basic level, the FD mount offered increased survivability of your precious lenses through the manner in which the optic attached to the camera. Entitled the breech-lock, this mechanism ensured minimal contact of areas susceptible to wear and has been helping filmmakers to get their work done for years.

Another bonus with this kind of glass has always been that the build quality of these early lenses has also superior, with most being constructed from durable metal. At the same time, this gave them a reassuring weight. These factors have helped to make the Canon FD lenses a popular choice for professional and amateur enthusiasts alike.

Major advances

Whilst the step forward to autofocus lenses was revolutionary, the use of the FD lenses has remained a viable option. Despite being obsolete from production, they're easy to come across through sources such as eBay





At the time of their release, FD lenses were deemed optically superior to many other brands and, while perhaps not meeting the standards of top-end modern video lenses, they're still capable of capturing beautiful imagery. For the amateur filmmaker, the lack of auto-focus shouldn't be a burden as it compels the user to get the hang of follow focus and gives a more hands-on approach that. ultimately, brings you closer to your film. Many will agree that it is often a wise choice to sacrifice a perhaps unnecessary function in favour of high-quality optics when choosing between an older lens and entry-level modern optics.

Where to start

Some 134 different FD lenses were produced during the 21 years of production and, obviously, some will be more suited to your project than others. But, a good place to start would be with a 50mm prime lens. The Canon FD 50MM 1.8 is a very common and reliable offering, but if you're in search of something that provides more in terms of shallow depth-of-field or nighttime capability then the Canon FD 50mm 1.4 can also be picked up for a relatively cheap price. That's just as long as you're happy to do

Behind the lens

Now 25 years old, Chad has over the past couple of years had to change his career course due to back and leg problems caused by spina bifida. He signed up for college, a stint which he has just successfully finished and is now set to start at Portsmouth University to study film and television production.

a bit of searching to locate one in the first place.

One thing to bear in mind is that, through the use of the adapter on your camera, you will be effectively increasing your focal length. This may not be a problem for certain shots, but it would still be wise to seek out an FD wide-angle lens of 28 or 24 focal length to pose as your standard optic. Due to the low costs of these widely available lenses, your options for experimentation are vast and if you're not happy with a particular lens then you're also not likely to lose out on money if you decide to resell at a later date.

Despite delivering very good quality for the price, FD lenses tend to become a bit 'soft' on the image with apertures wide open, but if found at bargain prices they are definitely still worth a shot. Many videos can be found on YouTube or Vimeo that clearly display the quality of these FD lenses mounted on modern cameras. So, check them out and expand your options of experimentation on a budget!

By College Continuent

Michael Nixon has just completed The Royalty, a short independent film that highlights the importance and heritage of independent cinema

The Royalty Cinema, Bowness-on-Windermere

What made you make this unusual short film?

Independent cinema offers an overall experience that chain cinemas simply can't match. I wanted to make a short documentary film that highlighted the importance and unique quality that they offer, in



on-Windermere. The Royalty is an independent cinema, open since 1926. It's an art-deco style building with many original features and lots of character, and importantly the only cinema in Europe with a working Wurlitzer, which is used on silent film nights and special occasions. My film is a personal piece featuring interviews with the owner, Charles Morris and Wurlitzer organist Mark Latimer, intercut with shots from inside the cinema, which I hope will evoke a sense of nostalgia and promote these great and iconic buildings.





What inspired it?

I'd visited the Royalty a number of times throughout my life, but the event that truly inspired me was a visit I made on Christmas Eve 2012, with my wife and producer of the film, Grace. It's a Wonderful Life was playing at the Royalty, complete with mulled wine and mince pies, so we decided it was an ideal way to spend the evening. The night was a sell-out, filled with people of all ages, all together enjoying a timeless film. It was while we were

there, enjoying the wine and the atmosphere, that I started to think about how visually amazing a place it is and how important it is to not ever lose such a building. So I wanted to do what I could to help promote it.



Did you have a budget?

The film was completely self-financed, so there wasn't a lot of money to go around to be honest with you. The main bulk of my spending was investing in a few new pieces of kit I needed to achieve the quality and look I aspired to. Luckily, I have some very close friends who work in the industry and believed in the project, who were thankfully up for working long hours over a weekend to get the film done. They basically worked for dinner and petrol money, so I was very grateful for that.



What's your own filmmaking background?

I studied graphic design at Salford University, focusing mainly on motion graphics and video work. After graduation, I stayed in Manchester to pursue a career in video editing. For a couple of years I worked freelance, editing for a small film company and also producing design work for various businesses. I also made a number of music videos for upcoming bands, all shot on good old mini DV. Since then I've worked as a video editor as my full time job for the last 8 years. The company I work for make television commercials for ITV. Through my experience there I've learnt a lot about the process of producing a piece of work, from script right through to final edit for television. I get to go out on the



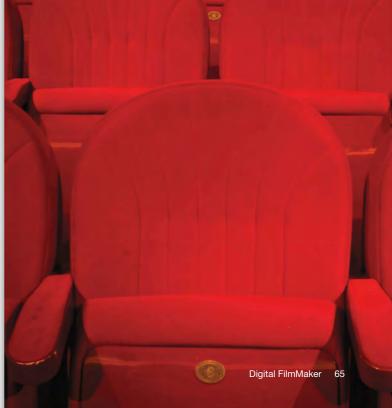


shoots from time to time and actually directed my first commercial recently, which was a great experience and gave me more confidence.

Last year I made my first short film called Bad Box, about a gravely injured cowboy and how he spends his last night before he *spoiler alert*...dies! The film is intended to be part two, so part one will tell you how he got himself in this situation, which I've yet to film but plan to do so at the start of next year. Bad Box is in its final stages of post-production and is due to be completed soon.

What sort of kit was used to make the film?

Fortunately, I was able to borrow equipment from my work. I used two Canon 5D MKII's set up for the interviews, one with a 24-105mm lens and the other with a Canon 50mm f1.4 prime lens. I wanted to keep the lighting quite moody and not blown out, so used some Tecpro LED panel lights and also some Sachtler 300-watt lights. For the interior, I used a 2-metre glide track, which was perfect for the long tracking shots I was after. I also knew that I would be filming in quite cramped spaces like the projection room, but wanted to keep the quality up and not just work handheld. So I purchased the new Edelkrone 2ft slider. It's a great piece of kit, which is so portable it fits in your bag. It really helped me achieve the look I was going for.





The sound for the interviews was recorded with an AKG C568B shotgun microphone to a Zoom H4N. My sound recordist, Simon Connor, is also a very talented musician who produced original music for the film.

One of the unique parts of my film is that all the music featured in the soundtrack was created from location recordings from within the Royalty cinema. Simon spent a whole day collecting and sampling various sounds within the building, including recordings of the Wurlitzer organ and even bits from the confectionary stand! So he built my entire soundtrack from manipulating these recordings, which turned out to be quite a challenge for him, but definitely worthwhile as it matches the tone of the film perfectly.

Did the film present you with any technical challenges?

The main challenge for myself and my camera assistant, Andrew Delgado, was how we lit each room we filmed in. I wanted the look of the film to be warm and ambient whilst showing off the classic features of the interior. The problem I knew I would encounter was in the grade, as the rooms we shot in were quite dark. I needed to ensure that when I pushed the darker colours in the grade, they didn't end up too grainy. I solved this using Grain

Fortunately, I was able to borrow equipment from my work. I used two Canon 5D MKII's set up for the interviews

The other problem we had was timing, as the cinema was still open for business that weekend, so we had to plan the interviews and additional filming around that.

The final challenge was capturing the Wurlitzer organ. The Wurlitzer is a huge instrument and most of it isn't actually visible from inside the cinema. Underneath the organ control panel and keyboard are two rooms in the basement full of the pipes and equipment required to make it run. For our final shots we needed footage from these rooms, which happened to be whilst a film was being screened, so keeping the noise down proved to be quite a fun challenge!

And how many people were involved?

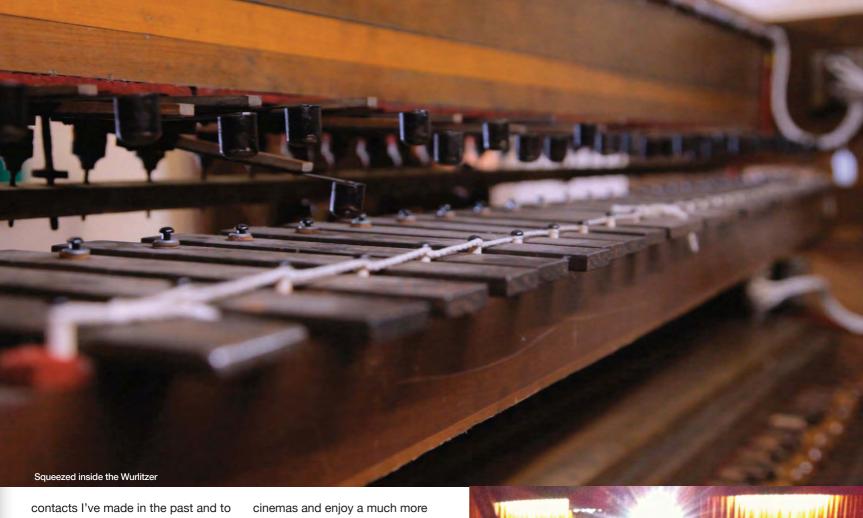
Four people in all. As it was a small shoot, sometimes in cramped locations, I wanted to keep the crew down to a minimum. I directed/shot and edited the film, my wife Grace

produced it, Andrew Delgado is a childhood friend and freelance camera assistant, so he helped me there, and Simon recorded the sound and composed the music. So we all pretty much doubled up our roles to get the job done, but I was really enthused with how well we all worked together on the day. Everyone knew their roles and got it done as a team.

What methods are you using to publicise it?

The promotional process is new to me, but it's a side that I'm enjoying. The film is already set to be screened in various cinemas in the Northwest, which is a dream come true for me. The first screenings were at The Roxv Cinema in Ulverston on the 27th July, and in the Small Cinema in Moston, Manchester on the 13th of July as part of the Miners Fundraiser festival. The film is also up on Vimeo, vimeo.com/ ghosttreeproductions/theroyalty and I've been sending links to some key





contacts I've made in the past and to some film festivals. The main event though will be a screening at the Royalty Cinema itself, which will be a real satisfying achievement!

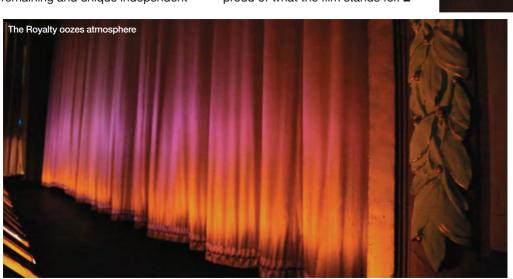
How has it been received?

The film has been really well received by everyone who's viewed it, which is a great response. I think the Royalty has struck a chord with people, as it's a very honest film that hopefully reminds the viewer of the first time they visited a cinema. And, also encourages them to maybe think about next time they go to see a film, to not simply go to a chain cinema, but to instead visit one of the remaining and unique independent

cinemas and enjoy a much more satisfying experience.

Are you involved in other projects?

I'm currently adding the finishing touches to the earlier mentioned Western, Bad Box. I've also written a script for a short thriller titled Please Do Not Disturb, a Hitchcock-inspired piece and all based in a single hotel room. The film is now in the preproduction stage, but I begin filming at the end of the year. My aim this year was to really focus on achieving my goal to be an independent filmmaker. I'm very happy with what I've achieved with The Royalty and proud of what the film stands for.

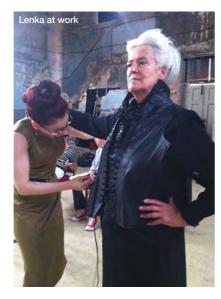




get to know the city. I then went straight into the second year of a BA in Fashion Design Technology because they said my portfolio was good enough, so I didn't have to do the first year." During her time at the London College of Fashion, Lenka worked for fashion guru Vivien Westwood as a model and cutter. "Working for Vivienne showed me how a real designer works," Lenka claims, "And gave me an understanding of the whole process". Pretty soon, Lenka was working in the theatre as well, and it was only a matter of time until she would be forging a career in film and television.

The first move

So when did Lenka decide to become a clothes designer and how did she get her start? "I was studying piano at school," Lenka remembers. "I'm a classicallytrained pianist. It requires real dedication, a passion for art and also history. My teacher was a real gentleman like you see in the old films of the 1940's! He gave me this sense of elegance and interest in elegance. While I was doing that I was also doing a sewing course in the evening and making clothes for myself. That's how it



really started." In 1998, Lenka went to a historical costume school in Puchov, Slovakia, called the Technical School of Clothing and studied scenography for a year, but her sights were already set on higher things.

"I always dreamed about the fashion design school in Slovakia (The Trencin School of Art) and they accepted me. There I studied lifedrawing, pattern-making, sewing, so it was great preparation not only as a fashion designer, but also making and sewing. Then I was selected by a German company, Karl Kratochwil, and they took me straightaway to Berlin as their

main designer for a year. It was very commercial and high-end for rich German people and I decided I wanted to do something more creative."

That something involved her move to London and enrolling at the University of the Arts, London College of Fashion. "I wasn't thinking so much about designing for film and theatre at first. But, while I was studying in London, I was working in the theatre at The Royal Opera House and the Young Vic, as a maker. Because of the skills from the Slovak school I was able to make patterns. It was very important and very appreciated, that skill. I was making lots of contacts from doing styling, lots of photoshoots, working with different photographers, using collections I was making in Berlin and in Slovakia for the photo-shoots. Slowly, I was discovering film and theatre."

A new career

The idea of a career in film and television as a costume designer didn't start to crystallise until after Lenka graduated. "I got the





Classic costume design

opportunity to go to Italy and I spent maybe a year in Rome, working in the Micca Club, which was a cabaret theatre. There I was really using my own skills and getting closer to film and theatre as a designer. I started to discover films because I had the influence of other people who introduced me to the beauty of cinema. I love 1930's and 1940's cinema. That's when I realised that designing costumes for film is what I love. In fashion, you create clothes that will appeal to many people and then you try to sell the design. In film and theatre, you create clothes for a particular person, it's about character, and that's what I love because the vision of the director comes alive. You're helping to create something particular and specific and original."

vocation, Lenka was faced with a difficult choice as the harsh reality about the Italian film industry made itself clear. "I decided to come back to London because in Italy it's hard: Cinecitta is no more, the films are not happening there as much as they used to." Back in London, Lenka started to work for The Costume Studio in Islington. "I came at the right time, because the main maker for women's wear had just had a baby, so

a half years as their costumemaker and designer, they do lots of different TV work and films. Sometimes they can't find what they need specifically, so we make these for them. This is how I got lots of TV work and commercials. I did Armstrong and Miller and The Impressions Show with Culshaw and Stephenson. I wasn't designing, but I was making."

"Then, in 2011, I was contacted by Nick Carew, the director, and it was the first short film I did called Wonderful, Terrible Thing." Made for the Straight 8, Super 8 competition in 2011, and premiered at the Cannes Film Festival that year. Wonderful Terrible Thing tells the story of a couple's life in four minutes in one continuous take without cuts. It's a remarkable piece of work, filmed on a Stedicam in one uninterrupted moving shot, with continuously changing costumes. "This was kind of the first challenge for me. I had to create lots of different costumes which are changing in front of the camera." Lenka says modestly. In fact the film is no mean technical feat for all involved, especially Lenka who had to find ingenious ways to add and remove costumes out of frame with the camera rolling.

"It was the whole life of this couple, there had to be things that were layered on them, they had several costumes on them. held on by poppers and Velcro. We had two dancers in the shot, sometimes they were taking



clothes off the couple, or when the couple went out of shot, I was there removing the poppers or quickly adding another dress on top, Velcroed on the back on the seam. People were around the camera, underneath the camera, trying not be caught in the shot. It was really funny, because we were rehearsing the whole day before filming. It was very difficult, especially for the camera operator, it was all about timing and about preparation." Such was the technical audacity of Carew's film that the whole team were invited to the Cannes festival. "We had lots of great feedback, because it was different and special, the whole story without cutting." Lenka marvels.

On the up

After the success of Wonderful, Terrible Thing, she and Nick stayed in touch and are in fact shortly to work on another project together. "We are filming in July, a short documentary about the Catholic run Magdalene laundries in Ireland. where female offenders were sent between 1900 and 1995. It's for TrueTube, a charity-funded website dedicated to creating short youth-focused factual

films. Nick is very creative, and he gives freedom to the people he works with. He wants to show the authority of the nuns and the suffering of the young girls."

Following Wonderful Terrible Thing, Lenka quickly established herself as a designer of flair, elegance and ingenuity as her first feature film opportunity came calling. "Last September I designed for a film called The Crypt (director Mark Murphy). Mark wrote the script as well. It's a horror film, I was scared just reading it! It's about a team who are sent to a church to investigate the tragic death of a young girl found in the crypt of a convent. It's a mixture of a lot of different types of horror like Paranormal Activity, Blair Witch Project. We were adding a true element of history that happened in the actual convent in the 19th Century, so there were some historical costumes in it as well, which is what I really love."

"It was a really amazing team, everything went according to schedule, and Mark was fantastic, very focused and professional. I was scared, because it was my first feature film and I am very thankful to Mark for giving me the opportunity. It was freezing cold. We were actually filming at the same Magdalene's church and we found an old call sheet." Touted as "one of the best horror movies in years" by GQ magazine, The Crypt has been picked up for distribution by Cinema Vault and is to be released in 3D later this year.

"Then I did another horror." Lenka recalls. "But more like a fairy tale, with Tom de Ville (who created Urban Gothic for TV) writing and directing, called Corvidae, starring Maisie Williams (Game of Thrones). It's a beautiful story about a girl turning into a crow. Most of the transformation was done in makeup, adding feathers to Maisie, and lots of mud because she was in a forest. Tom has already written the script for the feature version, so he's hoping to make a feature film out of it. It's a horror-fairytale for adults."

Short film work

Lenka also completed a second short in 2011, called To The Waters and The Wild (director

Alexander Braniff-Taylor). "It's a creepy fantasy short about old superstitions and faeries. I designed costumes and made them." Clearly, she is creating a name for herself in a range of genres as a versatile designer. So what costume designers have influenced Lenka? "Alfred Hitchcock is my favourite director," she enthuses. "When you see his films, the costumes are amazing. They're absolutely stunning! Hitchcock was so particular and wanted to have it perfect. Edith Head who costume designed most of his films is my idol, but she was working in a completely different time when the studios had designers in-house. These days we are all freelancers and it works differently.

At that time she had an enormous number of films to design and they were making lots of things. Nowadays, there is lots of buying, especially on low-budget films, not really making things. But I'm trying to





intimidate rivals). For me, it's very fan or anything. I met Dougie and he was telling me all about it. It's fascinating, how important the fashion for them was, but it was just the way they dressed. It just happened that they decided to have clothes like that, taking inspiration from bigger cities, when they were just from little towns. Some brands like Jaeger didn't want to be related with hooliganism, but they were. Even studying fashion, I didn't know about that, so I've learned a lot. I so I can't make things. I have to

looking forward to working with Danny Dyer again on Assassin.

different because I'm not a football need to show things as they were, use real clothes." **Big things happening** Before Top Dog, though, Lenka is

so lovely and very co-operative. Everybody on Vendetta was great. We had a fantastic team, we felt like a family. Stephen Reynolds (the director) was brilliant. It was his first feature. He was so professional. Apparently he's preparing a sequel to Vendetta."

So, all in all, it looks like a busy year ahead for Lenka, not that she's complaining. She has worked hard to get where she is now, and her skills are fast becoming recognised throughout the industry. So what advice does she have for anyone wanting to follow in her footsteps as a costume designer?

"It's hard to get into the film industry, as there are lots of people who want to get involved. There is no one way to break in. I would say that it is important to



know that this is what you really want. Doing lots of other projects, lots of shorts, low-budget films, just to get the knowledge and the experience is important. Find your own weaknesses as well, things you don't know about that you have to learn. Somehow the work comes, through social networks, websites. I did lots of stuff where there was no money involved, where you have just expenses. I guess you have to do this. I don't have a rich family, or someone who works in the industry as a relative, but I'm hard-working and want to do things, so I'm giving

everything to it and trying to learn, slowly getting higher budget films. Once you have the opportunity, you have to work hard. Even though it's a big world, it's a small world and people talk. If you're good, you are recommended."

Sounds like good advice. Lenka adds: "Be nice to people, don't burn any bridges! For the costume department, it's about the vision of the director and the actors. If the actor is not happy with how they look and what they wear, they come onto the set grumpy and then the producer and the director aren't happy, everything is postponed. The costume and make-up department have to make the actors feel comfortable and happy, and make them feel they look right for the role, so they can feel the characters. Sometimes, I give the actor some clothes and ask them just to walk around to make sure they are comfortable. Sometimes you have to adapt your original plans if the actors aren't happy. And sometimes it becomes a compromise between the costume designer, the director and the actor, so that everyone is happy. It's really all about just listening to the actors." ■





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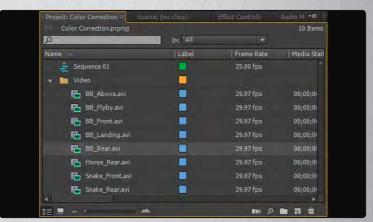


One of the cool things you can do in Premiere Pro CS6 is give your film a so called 'Movie Look', which essentially changes the color grading (tone) in some way. This can be achieved in a number of different ways, from third party plug-ins such as Red Giant, through to rolling out the Three-way Color Corrector. However, there are alternatives to using any of these and, with a little creativity, they can be used to drastically change the tone of your film, often without large render times.

In this short tutorial you'll use an Adjustment Layer, a new feature in Premiere Pro CS6 that allows you to add global changes (like color grades) to a whole sequence without having to copy and paste settings on to every single clip on the Timeline. As you will see, it also offers some

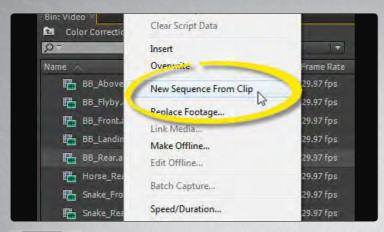
interesting options when using the Blend Modes.

This tutorial is based on chapter 2 of Mastering Adobe Premiere Pro CS6, published by Packt Publishing, which deals specifically with the workflow for editing a short film. Each chapter is project based and footage for most chapters is supplied, including this one. Before starting this tutorial, visit the publisher's website (tinyurl.com/ a6syu3d) and click on the Support tab in the middle of that page. Here you can download the Zip file for chapter 2 that contains material used in this article. Once you've finished downloading it, unpack the contents to the hard drive you've dedicated for storing your video material. When this is completed you're ready to proceed with the rest of the tutorial. So, let's get started.



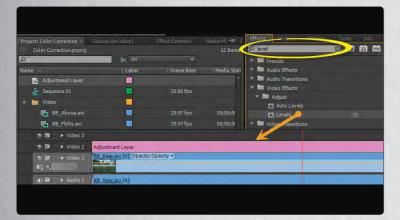


Import your footage... Once you have launched Premiere Pro CS6 switch over to the Project panel (Shift+1) and create a new Bin called Video. Open this in the Project Browser (hold down the Ctrl or Cmd key before double clicking the Bin if you don't want to open a new window) and import the video clips you downloaded from Packt Publishing (Ctrl or Cmd +I). Switch to Icon View once the import has completed.



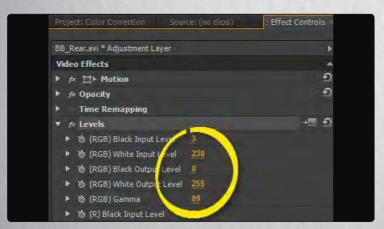


Setup a New Sequence... Create a new Timeline Sequence that exactly matches the properties of the clip by Right-Clicking the BB_Rear.avi clip and choosing New Sequence From Clip from the context menu. Once the Sequence appears, press \ (Backslash) to zoom the Timeline to the entire clip. Creating a new sequence in this way will help cut down on render times and increase the chances of real-time playback.



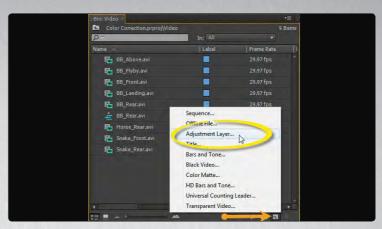


Adding contrast... Move the Timeline Indicator to about the 11 second mark (showing the sky, trees and sheep) to get a good idea of the changes you will make. Now you can begin adding effects to the Adjustment Layer, making changes to your clip below. Start by pressing Shift+7 to open the Effects Browser. In the Search Field, type the word Level, then drag and drop the Levels effect onto the Adjustment Layer in the Timeline.



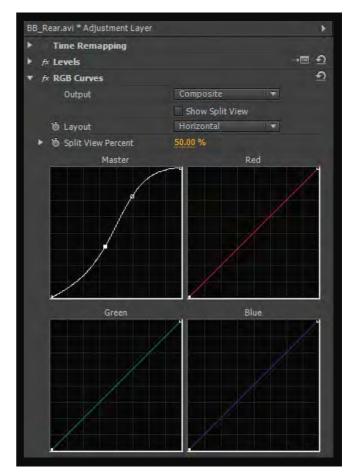


Adjust black and white levels... Now add some much needed contrast. Press Shift+5 to open up the Effects Control and dial open the parameters for Levels by clicking on the small triangle. With the effect controls open, change the following: (RGB) Black Input Level 3; (RGB) White Input Level 230; (RGB) Gamma 89. To see the changes you have made, Toggle the effect on and off by clicking on the fx button next to the word Levels.





Add an adjustment layer... Use Shift+1 to select the Project Panel and then click on the New Item icon at the bottom of the Project panel (orange arrow in the above illustration). Inside the context menu, select Adjustment Layer... Keep the default settings and click on OK. The newly created Adjustment Layer will appear in the Project Panel. Drag and drop it onto Video 2, then match the duration of the Adjustment Layer to the clip below.

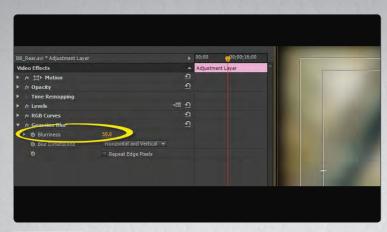




Add the curves feature... Press Shift+7 to move back to the Effects Browser, and type Curves into the search field. Drag and drop the RGB Curves effect to the Adjustment Layer and dial open the controls. Inside Master, click on the white line twice to create two points, then drag those points to create the shape shown in the above illustration. To remove a point, drag it outside the graph area.

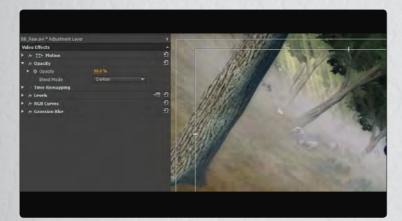
TUTORIAL CREATE A 'MOVIE LOOK'

ADOBE PREMIERE PRO CS6



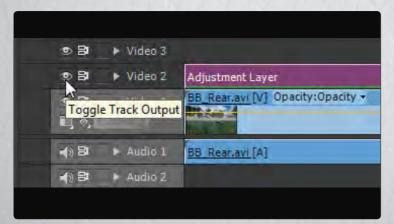


Add a dreamy look... The scene now has more contrast and better blacks, but you can do more to change the image than simply altering the color tone. Give this clip a dreamy look by adding a Gaussian Blur to the Adjustment Layer. Use the above methods, (Shift+7; Type 'Blur'; drag & drop Gaussian Blur onto the Adjustment Layer; change Blur parameter to 50). Things go a little crazy, but you will correct that in the next step.



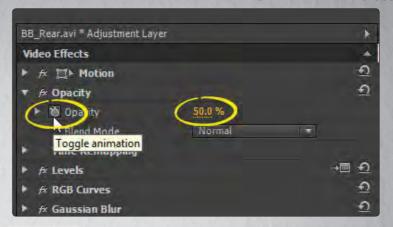


Blend modes... While you have the Opacity settings open, experiment with the Blend Modes to see what differences these make to your Adjustment Layer. With this particular clip the Blend Mode Darken appears to enhance the moody effect. Blend Modes work in a similar fashion to those found in Photoshop, and their use combined with changing the level of Opacity is a great way to fine-tune any effects added to an Adjustment Layer.





Review your look... Adding multiple effects in Premiere Pro can be a little awkward if you want to have an instant review of the changes you've made. By adding the filters to an Adjustment Layer you can easily flick between a 'Before and After' by toggling the Video track on and off using the Eyeball Icon to the left of the track name. As you can see in the Before and After effect in the next illustration, the changes are subtle, but worth the effort.



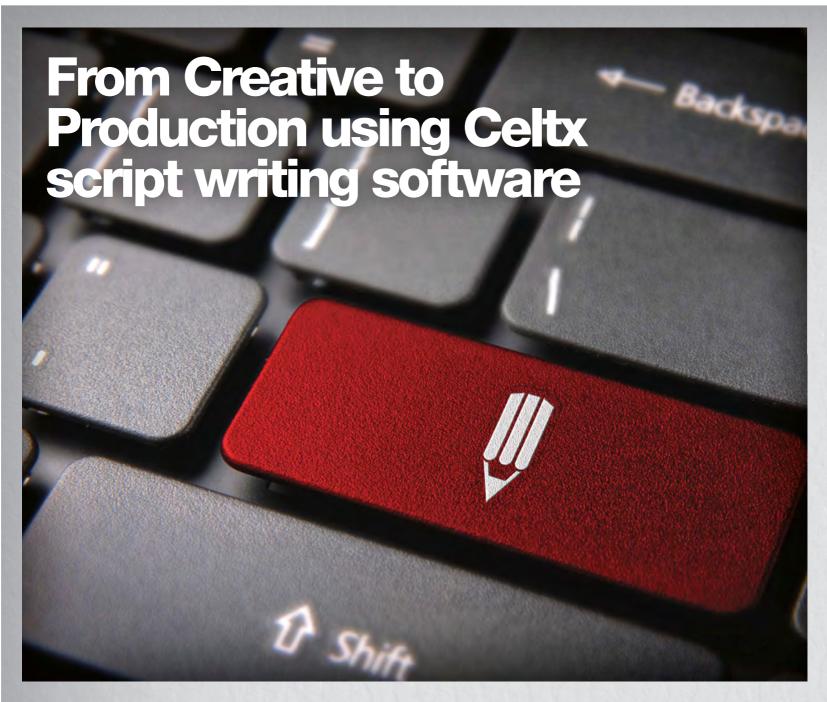


Tame the adjustment layer... Your clip probably looks unusable now, but don't worry, you can tame these stacked effects on the Adjustment Layer using the Opacity parameter to control the strength of the Adjustment Layer. Start by using Shift+5 to make the Effects Control the active panel, then dial open the Opacity parameters. Make sure the Keyframe Toggle is OFF (stopwatch icon) then change the Opacity value to 50%.





Save and Render... Once you have finished, Save your project before rendering the sequence. You've now learnt how to use some powerful new features in Premiere Pro CS6; the Adjustment Layer and Blend Modes inside the Opacity parameters. Combined together, these two new features allow you to create global changes to the look of your film with just a few mouse clicks. Granted, these changes may not look as grand as some effects that can be created using Plug-ins or After Effects, but with practice and using the many filters available as standard in Premiere Pro CS6, the looks you create should only be limited by your imagination and your capability to experiment. If you enjoyed this short tutorial, you might like to know a more detailed version can be found inside Mastering Adobe Premiere Pro CS6 by Paul Ekert, available from all good book stores and online retailers.



Learn how to take your script from the creative phase through to production using the free script writing software Celtx with Paul Ekert, author of Mastering Adobe Premiere Pro CS6

Unless you're planning on creating your film in the style of Mike Leigh, one of the more important elements of your project will be a good script. These days, script writing software has evolved beyond being just a niche word processor and is now something that can be used as part of your production process. There are a number of commercial script

writing programs out there, but one of the most popular is the free version of Celtx.

Celtx has been available on the PC for some time and is now available for the Mac, Android and iPad/iPhone platforms. And yes, you can (theoretically) share projects between all of these devices, although to realistically take advantage of that you will need to sign up for EDGE, which

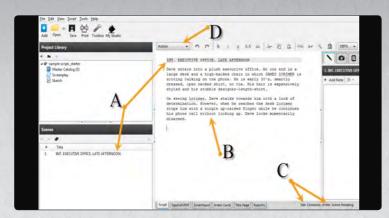
is a kind of super dropbox for Celtx users with a number of additional options thrown in for good measure. This will cost you \$9.99 per month or \$69.99 per year, but if you just want to use Celtx as a standalone application on the PC or Mac then it is truly free, which probably represents the best value for money for any product available to the no/lowbudget filmmaker.

To follow this short guide on Celtx you will of course need to download and install the software. Start by visiting www.celtx.com and creating an account (an email address and a password is all that's required). A confirmation email will be sent to that address

and you will need to click on the link to activate it. This will give you a 15 day trial of EDGE and access to the software itself. At the top of the page detailing EDGE you will see a tab labelled Desktop, Mobile & More, click this and select software either for the Mac or for the PC (labelled simply as Desktop). Once you have selected the software platform of your choice you will be asked to choose from a paid for or free version; for the moment pick the free version and download it to your computer. Once there, double-click the file to install it, following the on-screen prompts. With this completed, launch Celtx and move on to step 1 opposite.

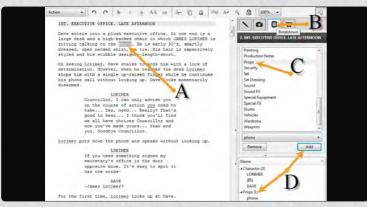
TUTORIAL SCRIPT WRITING

CELTX SCRIPT WRITING



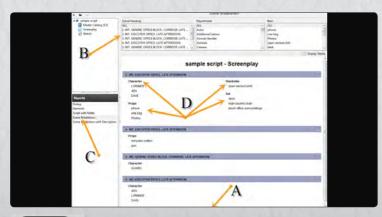


Getting started... Choose your project type, in this case FILM. Celtx likes you to get straight on with writing and you will now be prompted to insert your Scene details (A). When you press enter, this will appear in your scene list and the cursor will automatically move to the Action formatting style for you to write your action or scene description (B). Tip: The different format styles can be accessed through keyboard shortcuts (C) that are listed by context as you work, or via the drop-down list (D).



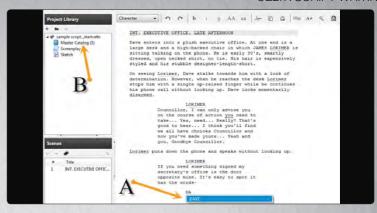


Creating an Item Catalogue... Once your script is complete you can use Celtx in the production phase of your project. Start by double-clicking a prop in the script (A). Open the Breakdown Tab (B) and scroll down the list until you find the word Props, and select it by clicking once on the word Props (C). Now click Add to create a new prop entry (D). Continue through your script highlighting Props, Locations and so on; note that each category has its own colour. Any entry can be removed from the Master Catalog as described in step 2.



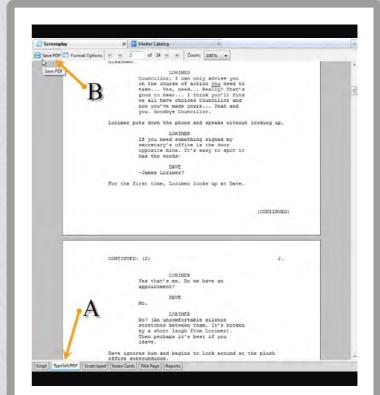


Creating Production Lists... Click the Reports Tab (A) and select any of the scenes in the Scene Heading List (B). Lastly click on Scene Breakdown in the Reports area (C). A list of items you categorised in the last step will be displayed (D). If you want to display only the Props for the selected scene, click on Props in the Department area. Use Ctrl or Cmd +P to create a print out of the currently displayed list.





Create Dialogue... Time to add some dialog. Press Enter at the end of the action or descriptive text, then Tab and type your character name, this will be entered into the Master Catalog once you press Enter. The character name will now auto-complete each time you type the first few letters (A). If you've created a name you are no longer keen on, double click the Master Catalog link (B), then right-click the name and select Remove from the context menu.



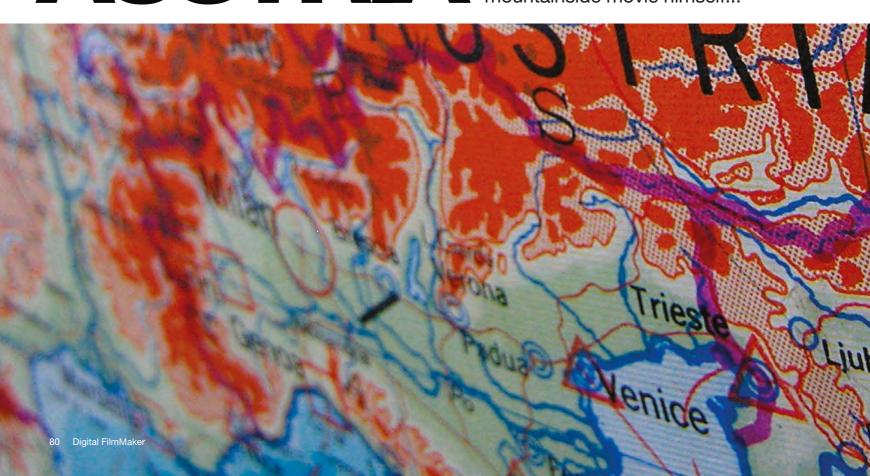


Final Print Out... Click on the Screenplay tab to display your script and then click the Typeset/ PDF tab at the bottom of the interface (A). It's important to note that Celtx needs to access the internet when creating a PDF version of the script. Click the save button to produce a PDF version of your script (B). If you need your script as a Word format, export your project (Script > Export Script) and change Save as type to HTML and save. Right-click your newly created HTML file and select Open with > Microsoft Word. Once the document is open in Word, select Save As, and then change Save as type to .Docx and save. Next month, Digital FilmMaker will show you how to use Celtx to create a storyboard for your script. Paul Ekert is a full time writer and to view samples of his work visit www.PaulEkert.com



AUSTRIA

Rob Clymo spends time exploring the filmmaking potential of Austria and even manages to end up in one mountainside movie himself...







I'd never actually been over to Austria before, often having found mountain inspiration beforehand in neighbouring Switzerland, or the glorious locations in Germany's Bavaria region. So, when an invite came through from the Austrian National Tourist Office to attend their ATB Experience, how could I resist? The event saw attendees flown in

from across Europe and beyond, for a travel-based extravaganza designed to improve the profile of this amazing country. On face value, and scanning down the list of people heading to the event, it looked like I was going to be the odd one out, being the only person representing the filmmaking community. And, in that respect, I had a few initial



doubts as to whether or not Austria would be of any use for a magazine feature.

Turn of events

The reality turned out to be that it was not only useful, it proved to be a perfect match, both in terms of seeking out some of the best visual locations you could hope for and, secondly, for hooking up with local filmmakers to get an insight into their world. The trip starts off in usual fashion, with a flight out of Heathrow one Sunday morning in early June, arriving in Vienna a couple of hours later. Comparisons with Switzerland are pretty hard to avoid as the airport is immaculate, boasts a cool design and everything runs quietly and efficiently. At this point we meet the affable Mr. Herwig Kolzer, regional manager for the Austrian National Tourist Office in London, who rounds up the assembled journo's and travel industry types and we get picked up by coach then head for the railway station Wien-Meidling.

We've actually got to head south, down to the first location of Villach. near to the Italian border, so our train journey is reasonably lengthy, but turns out to be a great way to get an introduction to the stunning Austrian scenery along the way. We even get to enjoy a very good meal in the buffet car, although oddly enough the train has come all the way from Poland, so the menu features culinary treats from that part of the world, not to mention their excellent local beer too.

Travel plans

A few hours later we arrive in the immaculately groomed location of Villach, which is surrounded by more stunning mountains. It gets better too, as minutes later we roll up at the Thermenhotel Karawankenhof, a five star spa hotel that has all of the amenities. It's a great place to spend a couple of nights, that's for sure. Just a shame that our schedule won't allow for much in the way of rest and relaxation, which would have been useful considering we're going to be heading up and down numerous mountainsides during the relatively brief visit.

After a quick freshen up we're









transported by bus to the opening ceremony, which is being held at the imposingly titled Fortress Finkenstein. There are some threatening storm clouds in the distance, but for now the views from the top of the castle are impressive and events are already underway, so anyone filming needs to be quick off the mark. As is usually the case, the shooting presents come challenges, with a presentation and assembled band and dancers being on a stage at the bottom of a stone amphitheatre. It enables good views of the performance, but navigating the terraces with

cameras and kit is tricky. The guy who has the task of capturing the event for the Austrian Tourism folks is also working with a tripod and slider, so he's got more than enough to carry around.

Shortly after the main musical entertainment is in the bag, there's the food and drink part of the evening to capture, which consists of a full-on traditional buffet set-up, right at the top of the fortress. The overall theme is on Carinthia and the theme 'Alpe Adria', with various rooms around the fortress offering an insight into so-called 'living books'. The idea is that a local expert is featured

sitting round a table in front of the camera talking about various aspects of the Austrian history and culture, relating to tradition, cuisine, dialect and traditional clothing. The inner rooms of the fortress aren't particularly well lit, so it presents a challenging scenario for the camera guys, but it all comes good in the end.

Meanwhile, the rain clouds have rolled in across the mountains and it's pouring down outside, so we were lucky to get the outside footage beforehand. Now though, the rain is so heavy it's actually pouring down through the gaps in the makeshift roof above

the buffet area, causing looks of consternation from anyone working with mains electricity, especially cameramen and the cooks. Thankfully, nobody gets frazzled and the rain luckily subsides a little before we head on outside to get the coach back to the hotel for some much needed sleep prior to the next days work.

Monday meet up

The Monday morning is taken up with a meet and greet at the Congress Centre in the centre of Villach, which proves to be a pretty straightforward shooting session with little in the way of challenges.



The venue is reasonably spacious, allowing plenty of easy access for filming the assembled guest speakers and also the break out sessions, which take place later on. While it might be easy enough, it's also not much of a test of skill, although all that is set to change later in the day when we hit our proposed 'activity'. This is something that was decided upon prior to departure and which, in my case, is a trek up the mountains. Prior to that, there's a chance for 'Lunch around Austria', for which my choice is Vorarlberg. Judging by the spread that's on offer then the folks in this region must enjoy top quality grub as it's delicious. It also proves to be a great way to stock up on the calories prior to our climb up the mountain a little later.

An hour or so later we head off on the coach again in search of

the Alpe-Adria-Trail, which is well known to hikers, climbers and skiers in the winter time.

Going up

At this time of year, however, it's transformed into an amazing spectacle of greenery and wild flowers. We arrive at the base of the mountain by coach in order to transfer to the cable car. From that we'll then transfer to the chairlift that'll take us the last bit of the journey, right up to the peak of the mountain. At this point of the adventure there are a couple of new filmmakers along for the ride, who've turned up with all of the kit needed to get their shots in the great outdoors. Of course, in the hot weather it's hard no to feel for them and their large backpacks, bulging with cameras and lenses, but that's all par for the course.



There are quite a few of us planning to go up the mountain and walk the trail, so it takes a while for everyone to climb on board the small four-seater cable cars. Nevertheless, once we get underway, the trip up the incline offers great views down over the surrounding area. Soon after, about three quarters of the way up the mountain, we disembark and jump aboard the chairlift, which whisks us up to the peak of the mountain in no time. The guys doing the filming at the top are the ones with the really hard job because, not only do they have to capture footage of the assembled journalists and travel industry people, but they also need to get an overview of the stunning scenery and also some interviews that will be cut into the video clips that will be shown later that evening. And, all the while, they have to keep working as we scramble over some pretty rough terrain around the top of the

mountain. Things don't get any easier as we begin our descent down the hiking trail, which is full of potholes, ruts and loose gravel that can easily send you head over heels. Even more so if you're walking backwards with a camera on your shoulder, although somehow the two camera guys make it to a café about halfway down, were we stop for a break.

At this point I'm also cornered and persuaded to do a piece to camera about the event so far and my thoughts on the filmmaking potential of the area. Luckily, given the short amount of time we have, the interview is soon in the bag and after a guick drink and some choice nibbles including local produce served on a wooden plate, we're off down the hill for the final leg back to the cable car. On the way down I end up sharing a car with the two film crew guys, who explain that they have to get back and edit the footage so it can be shown at the evening event that's been scheduled. It's a tall order, so we part company at the foot of the mountain - I head back to the hotel and they head off to hit the editing software.

Time to revive

The evening event, meanwhile, is billed as 'Austria. Arrive and Revive' and is set to take place at the Castle Maria Loretto. As you'd expect, this turns out to be another superb location, situated right on the edge of a lake. The main focus of the evening is to review the events of the day







and especially on the outdoor experiences that everyone has enjoyed. Therefore, it's meant that the film crew, which was working so hard during the day, has had to come back and rapidly edit their accumulated footage into a bite-sized presentation ready for the event. Needless to say, they look a little flustered but, all things considered, the resulting presentation looks pretty good. Even yours truly gets featured in the aforementioned short interview, where I talk about the filmmaking potential of the area.

This event is also being filmed for posterity too, although



the layout and sheer number of people makes that a little tricky. In addition, there's a live stage outside in the grounds, overlooking the lake, which makes it an excellent location for shots, although unfortunately there are quite a few unfriendly mosquitoes around ready to have a go too.

Travel Tuesday

First thing on Tuesday there's some filming to be done at a morning networking meeting, held again at the conference hall, where the event gets wrapped up in typically fast and efficient Austrian style. Next up, we're set to head off in all directions for our 'best-of' experiences, which in my case will be to see what the region of Upper Austria has to offer the filmmaker. So, it's back onto another coach, although this one is very nicely appointed with plush chairs and a lounge at the back, plus hot and cold drinks on tap. What's more, the weather is excellent again, so it provides the perfect vantage point from which to take in more of that gorgeous Austrian scenery along the way.

Joining us for the journey to Upper Austria are several members of the local tourism offices, all of which have some tales to tell as regards the things to see and do once we get there. We head off up the highway and, even from this main trunk road, it's still possible to see some stunning scenery on show. We park up

and climb aboard an assembled collection of electric bikes for a leisurely spin down along the edges of the water. There's a natty cycle trail here, which allows you to get right to the edge of the lake, while also being easy to navigate even when carrying cameras and equipment. It's times like this that having a GoPro or something similar makes a good deal of sense, particularly if you're after footage on the go and don't have a lot of time to get it. After shooting some bits and pieces here we head off for a light lunch before the next port of call, which is to be another lake that looks even more impressive than this one it seems.

Lake Traunsee

A short while later we stop next to said beautiful lake, which features the imposing Lake Castle Ort.

Traunsee is of particular interest to filmmakers because they have a dedicated service aimed firmly at people wanting to make films and television programmes. With their own dedicated website at www. filmland.at and knowledgeable staff, this makes the process of filming in the area a breeze. They state that there's over 30 years of filmmaking experience in TV and film production at hand here and, alongside the obvious natural beauty of the area, they can also deliver professional location



services, guides, a film studio, casting agency, actors and, in fact, just about anything else you'd need before, during and after production.

As is the case with many areas around the globe, local and national authorities have been quick to seize on the potential to be had from welcoming keen filmmakers in any size or capacity. Not only does it get you additional exposure, even more so if it turns out to be a Hollywood blockbuster, but there's also the added benefit of extra income from associated extras, such as accommodation and food requirements from visiting crews. Hopefully, if you have a hit on your hands, you'll subsequently be welcoming visitors in their droves too, all keen to see first hand where said blockbuster was filmed.

Capturing the castle

Meanwhile, we've parked close to the entrance to Lake Castle Ort. which is a very well known location and one of the most photographed in Austria. It's not hard to see why, and it's also been the main location for a TV series called Schlosshotel Orth; a big hit for the domestic market. For fans, there are tours, not only of the many and varied locations in the area, but also of the original film studios. Interestingly, there are also film workshops, which filmmakers and fans can attend and these allow members of the public to try out filming and acting, as well as discovering the more technical aspects of making a TV show like Schlosshotel Orth. It covers other practical day-to-day things, including how sets are built and gives newbies a great insight into the terminology used.

During casual conversation, it transpires that one show has apparently been shot back in the UK, down in Newquay, Cornwall. Our guide explains that he and his family recently headed over for a visit and went to the iconic Headland Hotel in the town to see where one of their most popular shows was filmed. It all seems rather strange when you consider the great locations that are on offer in Austria and a film crew heads to the UK to get their footage. Meanwhile, after a boat

For fans, there are tours, not only of the many and varied locations in the area, but also of the original film studios



trip around the lake and a short tour of the town, where we film a few hapless journalists trying their hands at pottery making, we climb back on board the bus for our next and last destination of the day - a hotel on the banks of the Danube.

Discovering the Danube

En route to the accommodation we get to see, and film, first hand just what sort of impact the flooding in Central Europe is having on the area. The water levels have dropped ever so

slightly, but it's easy to see where the river has flowed over the top of the banks and subsequently dumped millions of tons of silt and debris on the surrounding countryside. There doesn't appear to be any obvious damage to houses and business but, when the manager of the hotel comes aboard, he's quick to apologise for the fact that the hotel restaurant has been flooded. When we arrive there, the hotel is sitting just above the fast-flowing Danube, while along the banks the clean-up

operation is already well underway.

The next morning it's back onto another collection of electric bikes for a tour down the river bank. much of which is still covered in a layer of grey gunge. Nevertheless, the scenery here is stunning right on down to the point where we get off the bikes and on to a small ferry boat that takes us across the river. Again, there's endless opportunity here for capturing great footage, while afterwards we have a quick coffee before heading up into the hills for an up-high overview of the incredibly curving Danube down below. From there, it's a short hop on a minibus to a restaurant for lunch before heading to Linz.

Learning about Linz

Now a lot of people know the name Linz if you mention it, but not all of them are quite sure why. This once very industrial town is also the place where Adolf Hitler spent his early years. It's a stigma that the area has come to live with, while Linz itself has been working hard to put the murky history behind it.

In fact, the city was given European Capital of Culture status back in 2009 and is now working hard to present its positive side, which includes a great blend of old architecture and history, including the Brucknerhaus and the Pöstlingberg church alongside many new buildings, such as the Lentos Art Gallery and the hugely expensive new Musiktheater Linz opera house, which has been put together using countless unique blocks of stone. Needless to say, if you're looking to capture a snapshot video of the changing face of Austria, then Linz therefore makes as good a place to visit as any other city in the country.

Going home

The journey home is made up of two legs, the first one of which is a short hour-long hop to Vienna from Linz, on board a small turboprop plane. Along the way this allows us to see the extent of the river flooding down below. Then, on arrival at Vienna it's a quick and easy transfer to the Heathrow flight, which conveniently gets us back into London early in the evening. Job done.





vast amount of films with my Canon 550D and also have experience with full frame cameras. I have been lucky enough to film all over the UK, as well as abroad, which has provided me with a little income that gets me through my time at university.

My first ever directing experience

I suppose officially this would have been my Jackass-style stunt videos when I was younger, where I would command my mate to 'jump out of a tree', but I guess that's not really what you mean. I wouldn't say it was my first experience of actually directing, but my first university project was a very new experience for me as I was working with people I hadn't known for long and I had the pressure of using lights, a good camera and very good actors. It was the first short film I had actually directed on my Film and Television Production course. It was hard for me to not jump on the camera and do it all myself, as I know how sometimes it's hard to convey the vision you want to someone else. So it was a good lesson for me to just let things go and work as a team. It was a very tight shoot as we had to make five films in one week. My film took around eight hours to finally get done. I also had the flu at the time, so it really took it out of me that week, but I was really pleased with the outcome of the film.



Something from nothing

In my second year, we were told to create a film adaptation of a children's book that was aimed at kids. We were first put into groups of around six, and I happened to get put with most of the people that had just joined the second year so I had never met them before. That was frustrating as I had just made good connections with people on my course who I was hoping to work with. We eventually decided to go with Mr. Forgetful from the Mr. Men series by Roger Hargreaves. I was on camera, so I worked very closely with the director sorting out which

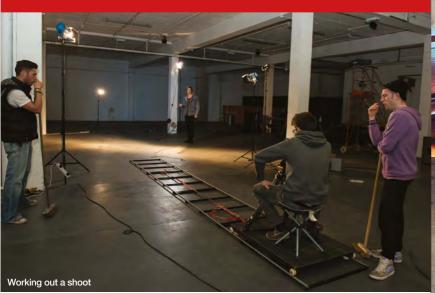
shots we wanted and the locations that would be fitting for the film. I was very excited, as we had just been introduced to the Panasonic AF101 with some very good prime lenses. We had at least two months to get all the pre-production sorted, which is where I realised that the group was really strong and we were really turning nothing into something quite special. Shooting went very well and it was probably the first shoot where absolutely nothing went wrong, which is unusual for any project! When I got it into post it was great fun mixing the shots and finally seeing what two months of pre-production had done to the film. We ended up getting a high first for the film, which we were incredibly proud of.

Experience outside the course...

A lot of the projects I have worked on have been outside of the course. I've been very lucky in working with very talented people, interviewing wellknown people and getting to travel to places for free. The free food is always good too! I recently went on a trip to Paris to film a music video for a talented musician, Billy Doze. I also went to Barcelona to film a bunch of promotional stuff for an entertainment, promotional company. I am a big believer in that whatever you do, if you work hard and be the best you can, great things can come to you. Tenacity and persistence has also been the reason for a lot of amazing opportunities I've been given over the years. One email I sent over a year ago has got me a ton of work and



I know that if I wasn't at university, I would still be filming. Once you catch the filming bug I don't think it goes away



landed me shooting interviews for well-known people and was also the reason I got to go to Barcelona. I would say my favourite things to shoot at the moment are music videos and short films. Promotional videos are fun and they look pretty enough, but I feel as though a lot of the time that I don't have enough time to plan the video out, for obvious reasons. I like my approach to film to be 'well prepared' instead of 'point and shoot'. I hope though, that one day I'll be working on a full-on juicy feature.

Working on your own can sometimes be very demanding and you have to have absolutely every shot you need - there is no B cam to change back to if needed. I also do everything from preproduction right to the last bits of post. I'm currently working on a short film at the moment that I have co-written and will be directing it called Keep Digging. It's the first project I've made that will be over 20 minutes. We are in the stages of pre-production at the moment but the project is really coming together quickly. The organising and prepping has got me really excited. It's my first time using the funding platform Kickstarter too.

Equipment choices

Over the two years now of being at university, one thing that has been amazing and one of the reasons for me attending Hertfordshire has been the variety of equipment. We are taught with industry standard equipment, as I mentioned before, like the Panasonic AF101, which has a 4/3 MOS image sensor creating that depth-of-field and quality that most DoPs want. The prime lenses we work with are also amazing, including the 50mm f1.4, which again allows you to create that lovely shallow focus and is great for shooting in low light. I also use the SQN-4S, which is a brilliant, versatile sound mixer. Sometimes I use the Zoom H4N mic as an external recorder too, which I match up in post after. We have Diva and Dedo lights and a selection of 350W and 600W Arri lights that are perfect for any type of filming. I own a Canon 550D with a few lenses, a shoulder rig, tripod and I edit on Final Cut Pro 7. In my second year, we were taught how to use a jib and I have also been taught how to use a steadycam, which is great fun to get to grips with. I used tracks in the last film I worked on with a crane mounted on top too.

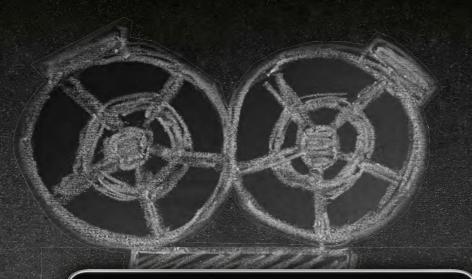


The shot took an unbelievable 7 hours to prepare and was set in a restaurant full of extras. We made the crane fly over everyone as we passed through the restaurant to the other side. It was a complicated shot as we needed to hide any lighting that was visible, whilst making sure we didn't behead any of the extras. The shot turned out great in post with a bit of tinkering on smoothcam in FCP. Uni lets us hire any equipment out for our own projects that we work on for free, so naturally we all take full advantage of that.

And finally...

I know that if I wasn't at university, I would still be filming. Once you catch the filming bug I don't think it goes away. University has really opened me up to all aspects of film. I personally enjoy working with the camera and directing, but it's good to have an understanding of all areas. Learning about the importance of pre-production has also dramatically improved my films and the way I think about producing them. What's more, networking and meeting new people is one of the highlights too - it's great working with like-minded people. Everyone shares the same passion as you, so it drives you on further. More importantly, it also keeps you on your toes.

My goal is to eventually become a Director or Director of Photography, but I know a lot of work has to be done before then. I'm very excited for what the future holds, especially as the world of film seems to be constantly changing. With so much new affordable technology flooding in, this is a very exciting time to be a filmmaker, which largely explains the current boom in independent filmmaking at the moment. I have one more year left at university, before it will be time to go out into the real world and pursue the career that all began with my impromptu adaptation of Cloverfield. Please do take a look at some of my work, which is available on Vimeo and also keep your eyes peeled for Keep Digging. Cut! ■





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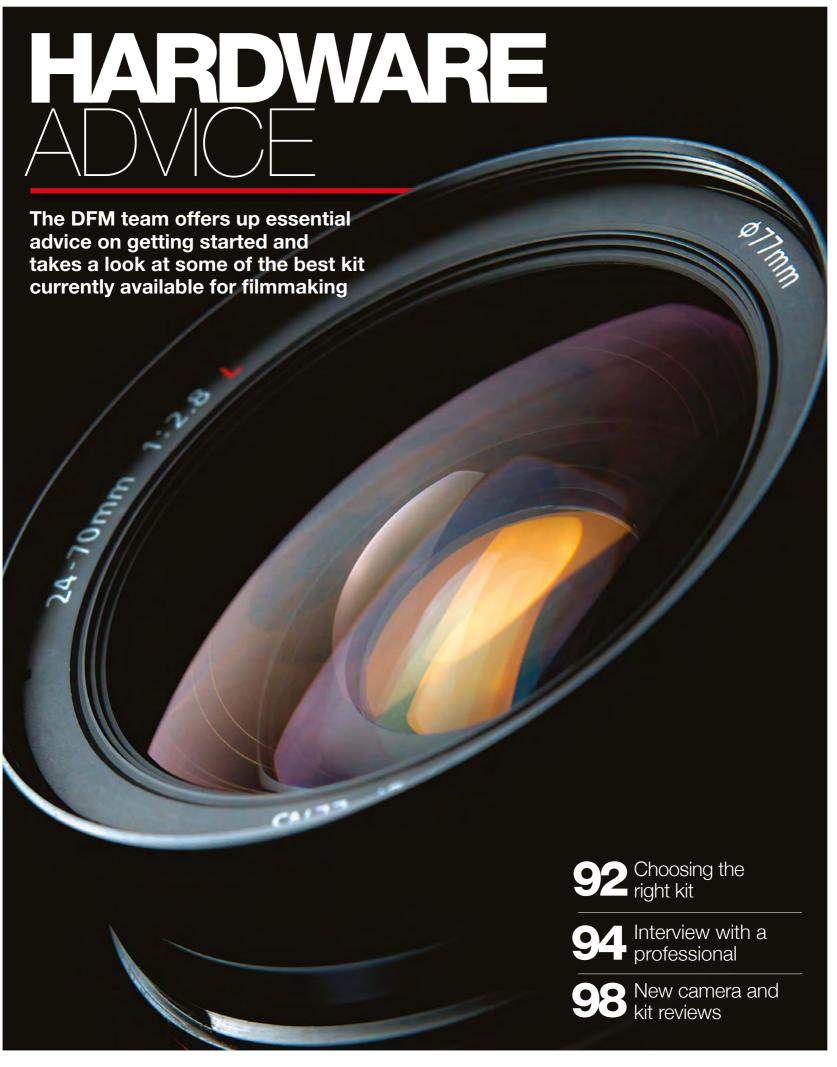
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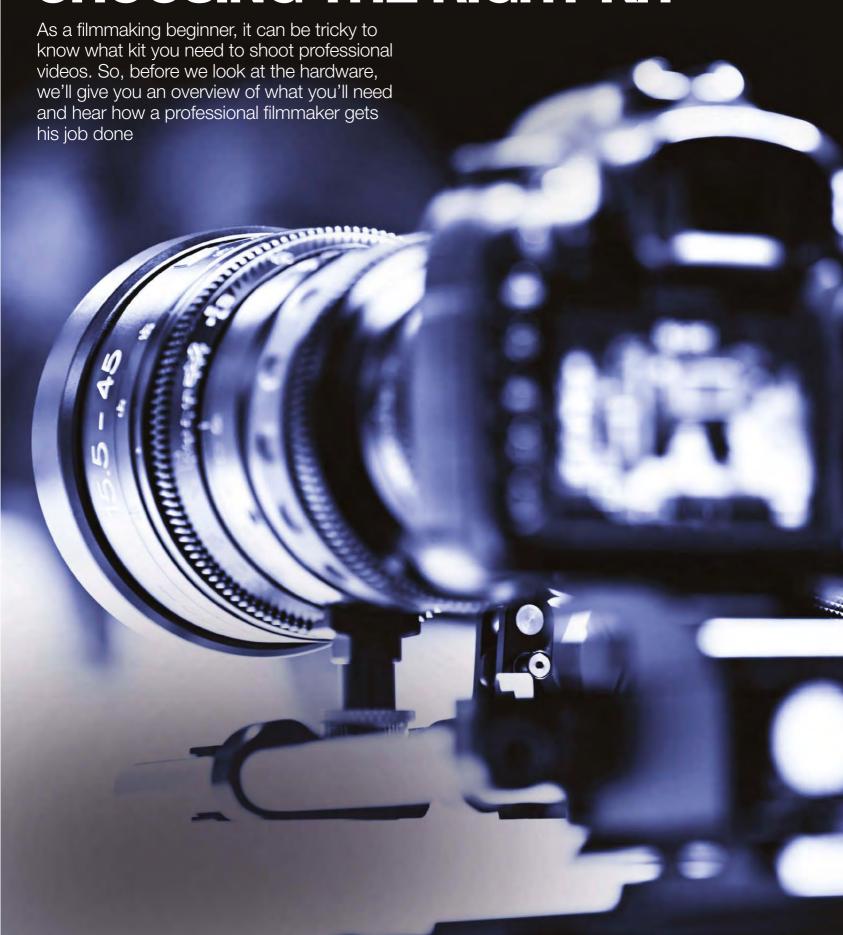
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SHOOTING VIDEO WITH A DSLR CHOOSING THE RIGHT KIT





High-quality video production tools have become hugely accessible over recent years. With the development of new technology, even the low-end kit can rival some of the professional equipment of years gone by. Although achieving a professional level of video production depends on a sizeable amount of skill and experience, having the resources to hand that allow you to test these skills requires an initial investment in crucial recording equipment.

Capturing HD video with a DSLR is relatively cheap compared to the high-quality video cameras of several years ago, and in the right hands, they can even rival cinemaquality cameras. However, with the growing market and countless resources both on and offline, it can be difficult to decipher where your money can best be spent.

As with most areas of modern technology, cameras are forever changing. With new specification sheets and better features being developed all the time, they can become old news very rapidly. It is, therefore, very common for your DSLR to be the first item on your kit list to be replaced, whereas lenses and other accessories can last almost forever.

Lenses

Acquiring quality lenses is just as important as your camera choice, and many would argue even more so. High-end lenses will likely outlive most of the equipment and accessories in your arsenal, including your DSLR. Lenses are also relatively timeless, meaning that no matter how far technology progresses, they will always be able to produce top-quality video.



Most serious videographers will also argue that the best optics for shooting video are prime lenses. Prime lenses are those that do not zoom, but simply have one fixed focal length. Prime lenses also generally produce a cleaner, higher quality picture, as well as having the advantage of a fixed wide aperture. The 50mm prime lens, for example, is one of the most popular lens options available. It has a focal length that is thought of as a 'normal' lens, because it provides an image comparable to that of the human eye. All of the manufacturers offer a 50mm prime lens, which, although it equates to more than the stated 50mm length on crop sensor cameras, provides a great and highly practical place to start your new filmmaking journey.

However, depending on the subjects you're trying to shoot, a zoom lens may well be your perfect companion. There is a huge selection out there to choose from, with some being more suited to shooting video than others, and all coming in at varying qualities and price points. Typically, zoom lenses don't have the benefits of a fast aperture, and most of the beginner level lenses have a variable aperture throughout the zoom range. That said, a zoom lens with a large selection of focal lengths will allow you to play with the field of view and give you all the flexibility over composition that a prime optic simply can't.

Audio

The sound of your video is arguably as important as the footage you're capturing.
Unfortunately, the built-in microphone within DSLRs should only really be reserved for emergencies. Luckily, there is an extensive range of alternatives for capturing high-quality audio.

For the videographer recording on the move, a simple external microphone plugged into your DSLR is a great option. Even the most basic of external microphones will be better equipped to remove unwanted background noise and capture crisp and clear sound more effectively from your subject.

For those who have more control over where their audio is coming from, potentially where the events being filmed have been pre-determined

or scripted, using an external audio recording device is a popular method to call upon. The recorder can be placed anywhere away from your camera, and the separate audio file can then be synced with the video footage in post-processing.



Stability

Second to audio and video quality for those serious about capturing the best possible video is stability. A smooth and seamless video can be the difference between a professional looking movie and an amateur clip.

There's a huge selection of stability options out there designed to meet the needs of every videographer, whether you're going for a dynamic shot, remaining static, or chasing your subject across a wide open scene.

You'll also find endless accessories that can be attached to your kit list too, from extra lenses to lighting kits and advanced camera rigs. Although most of these aren't necessary items to get you started on your videography journey, they'll soon become everyday items that play a part in adding professional production value to your movies.



Interview Pro

Sharaz Ali is a director and filmmaker who has recently unveiled Writhe, his new short film. Digital FilmMaker finds out about his kit choices plus past and future projects...



What's Writhe, your latest project about?

Writhe is a self-funded short film, which was screened at the Cannes Film Festival and in London's West End. It is a dark story about a woman scorned. The title means pain, suffering and to twist...and all of these emotions are thrust onto the viewer!

What other projects are you working on?

Current projects include, at different stages of development, a radio play, TV drama and a feature film. I am always being creative and looking at new ideas. A tip I suggest to anyone is to take a notebook everywhere, because you never know when a creative moment will happen.

How do you go about getting your projects noticed, from both fans and potential new team members?

For getting a project noticed from the get-go, especially for attracting the cast and crew, social media has played a huge role! Of course, not everyone



can act but advertising for cast, crew or locations on the likes of Facebook and Twitter seems to be a good way to get the ball rolling and get great PR at the early stage of pre-production. In a matter of hours, I sometimes



have potential locations, interested crew members and a list of cast wanting to get involved! This is always a real treat, as quite a lot of the time they will be in the friends circle and will not necessarily charge, thus the bonus of saving on budget.

As for generating interest and marketing for the film, I have found the above to be a vital tool. For example, I uploaded the poster for Writhe on the Facebook fan page and, within minutes, I had a 100 views, shares and it went viral. I was pleasantly surprised, but it did also have the beautiful Armeena Khans face on it! The actor, Geoff Cooper, DOP Haridas Stewart, scorer Niraj Chag, sound designer Alejo Garcigoy, make-up artist Bushra Chapal, recordist Nathan Ashton, photographer Saima Jafri, Neil Sean and Fesl Khan have all, including myself, had friend requests from around the world all

Are you not keen to upgrade to the newer Canon Mark III, or are the extra features not quite worth it yet?

No. As I've discussed with many people, either they can buy the Mark II and accessories or the Mark III, depending on what you prefer. Overall, I'd stick to the Mark II and would only upgrade to a Mark III if there were more jump-out features like 2K, for example. Overall, if budget is not an issue, of course Mark III irons out rolling shutter and moire. If that's a vital issue, then Mark III.

Personally, I'd jump up to the 1DX or head over to the better Canon C100 or Blackmagic cinema cameras.



due to the world of social media! Now where else can you spread the words so fast and for free?!

Moving on to the kit, do you have a favourite camera system or a preferred brand, and do you have a favourite camera to shoot with?

Preferred cameras I've been mostly using are the Canon DSLR or the Canon C300s, as they offer great quality and flexibility for the budget. The Canon 5D Mark II is a firm favourite as it can still compete with a lot of the new cameras due





to its full frame sensor, yet it's been around for about 5 years. Now that's some going in the digital world, but I think an Arri Alexa is next on the cards!

So what is in your typical kit bag?

Ask any director and they're covered for everything, from a special light to an actress who may require a plaster. Depending on the job, the kit bag varies, but the foundation of the bag includes, of course, the camera and a handful

of lenses; primes (ranging from f1.4) for low light situations to shallow DOF shots and a zoom (18-135mm) for the on the go shots. There is also a Manfrotto Maxima LED light, as you never know when you may require this. Just the other day I was filming inside an elevator for my short film Stuck, and this helped saved time and the day.

As well as this, I have a shoulder mount. There are many out there, but this one is particularly small and made from plastic, so it's Is there one piece of kit you simply couldn't be without, be it a camera, lens stabiliser or whatever?

Well, it changes weekly as there are so many 'vital' things we all seem to need. Many would say you can't live without your camera, but to me, I have seen people have a good camera but the glass in front has been poor or just a simple prime - you're better off shooting on your Phone. So, to me, the most important is a lens that suits your needs. The glass is what makes the picture, no matter how good your camera is, and is the one thing that you can continue to use in the future, once your camera is a nice paper weight or something you can drink out of!

great when travelling or moving around a lot. The beauty of it is that it can rest on your shoulders and keeps both your hands free to control the camera. Alongside, there's a handy lens cleaning kit, audio adaptors, HDD, card reader, headphones and a Rode video mic, because you never know when one might want to use the camera for some behind-thescenes stuff or back-up your card at the first chance you get!

Is there one piece of kit you really want to add to your arsenal?

My dream piece would be...can I have three wishes?! An Arri Alexa would be one part of my dream kit choice and okay, I know I'm being greedy now, but mix that with a track and dolly, then all my dreams would come true, for now at least! I love movement in shots and in Writhe, I had a lot of tracking shots, as I wanted the whole piece to feel slick and to keep moving forward.







Is there anything new on the horizon that you are eager to get your hands on?

Investors, good teams and, of course, new toys are always being released at a rapid pace that it is hard to keep up and one has to pick which one they would like to

invest their time and money into. Besides the Alexa, the Blackmagic 4K Production Camera has got the hairs on my neck standing up!

Do you like to make your films with a team behind you, using an expert in each field, or do you prefer to take control yourself?

There is no 'l' in team - but I am the director! So you do need a pilot, as I say, and the rest are your crew members. You want everyone to work to the same goal and show the same commitment as you. The beauty of shooting Writhe was that I was working with a fresh team, a hungry one at that. They were all in it for the love and kept the momentum and drive going, but they were also in it for the game. Not only did I write,



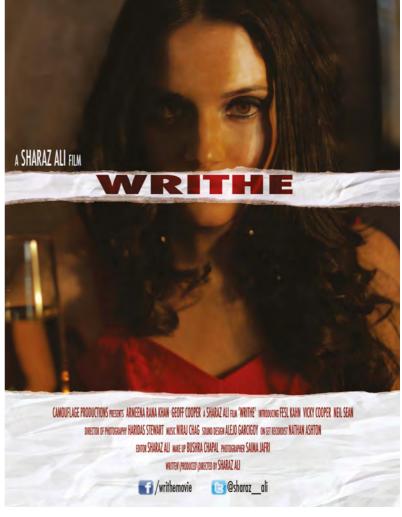
produce, direct and edit the film, I had a small team which, due to availability, kept changing to add to the stress. One thing I learnt was that one should always have a 'B' team - as you will find out many times - crew members are often busy with other projects just when you thought all the pieces of the puzzle were in place. Just like the actors on screen, having an 'A-list' crew will take your project from good, to amazing!

Do you think there is, or has been, a single piece









of kit that has been a major game changer for videographers?

The game changer has always been the digital video. But the next step to that was the DSLR. As digital videographers always wanted that depth-of-field and 'filmic' look, they were stuck with third party equipment and postproduction manipulation to get

the desired effect. Then came the 'Best Of Both Hovis loaf' DSLR. Digital ease and price, mixed with a 'filmic' look and without the addons. It came to a point where even wedding videographers and indie filmmakers were using the exact same equipment, yet producing different results for completely opposing markets.

Of course, there is the separate

argument that you're not a filmmaker until you shoot on film, but who has the budget? And, amongst many average Joe's, who cares? I still do, but everyone has wised-up to cheaper alternatives and the flexibility. Maybe one day I can afford to shoot on film - that would be my third dream/wish come true, but for now and the foreseeable future, I'm a digital

filmmaker, and filmmaking is an art, so it's always about what you paint on the blank canvas that the audience will walk away with. Not if it's shot on film or digital.

Do you prefer to shoot with basic, minimal kit, or are you much more at home with a large set-up?

How long is a piece of string?! You shoot with either what budget allows, or what you require. I, for one, prefer to shoot with exactly what I need and if you have an extra, that's a bonus, but you have to be logical. On Writhe, I was opting for a jib shot, but the cost, time and transport of this one shot would seem illogical. In some cases, I see shooters get 'their moneys worth' when they hire something, as in they start shooting a lot of shots using it - for example, a jib, as it's there. Not that it helps the story or anything, just to justify its hire! But that's just not being creative.



SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC RX100 II

Sony's popular advanced compact camera has been improved with an impressive new range of features

The original RX100 was a very popular compact-style camera from Sony, offering a first in Near Field Communication - allowing you to remotely control the shutter from a mobile device as well as instantly transfer data to social networking sites. This new version is billed as an advanced pocket-sized camera, featuring a 1.0-inch Exmor CMOS sensor



with 20.2 effective megapixels. However, the RX100 II isn't simply another compact camera. Attached to the front of the RX100 is a fixed 3.6x optical zoom lens with Carl Zeiss optics and an ultra-bright f/1.8 aperture. Around the back of the camera is a 3-inch 1,229k-dot tiltable LCD screen. This not only makes it excellent for viewing



videos, but convenient for recording at various angles. It's possible to utilise the optical zoom while you're filming, and there is also a useful wind filter. What's more, it's possible to use Sony's built-in image stabilisation to help keep your handheld shots nice and steady. There's the choice of full HD at 24 or 25fps, with the option of MP4 recording at a reduced resolution.

VERDICT

The RX100 II is a very small and simple camera, and although it is billed as an advanced compact model, it may be a cut too low for the avid videographer. However, it has proven optics in the form of an f/1.8 Zeiss lens, and an ISO that goes from 100 to 25,600, which will see the RX100 II producing stunning video and standing its ground as a great performer in less than ideal light.

Price £649 Web www.sony.co.uk



CANON EOS 70D

Sitting towards the top of the consumer range, the 70D is the latest DSLR from Canon



Canon has made a name for itself as the top dog among the DSLR brand names when it comes to videography.

The new 70D is designed to build upon the success of the 60D, slotting in among the other cameras aimed at keen amateurs. And, with the 70D, Canon is keen to improve how DSLRs focus during video shoots. It's widely known as one of the major pitfalls for filmmakers using a DSLR, but the 70D looks to bridge the gap towards camcorder quality. The phase-detection autofocus

technology is sensor-based and sees each pixel consisting of two individual photo diodes. In Live View these are read separately then together for imaging. Other sensor based autofocus systems use specific pixels for auto focusing.

As well as this new autofocus system, the 70D is capable of shooting full HD video at 24/25/30 fps, which can be increases to 50/60 fps in 720p resolution. There is also a built-in stereo microphone, which is great for those sound recording emergencies. But for times when you're a little more prepared, there is an input for an external microphone.

VERDICT

The 70D packs a lot of punch. With the new autofocus system it'll be interesting to see how it develops the way we shoot, and will undoubtedly be an excellent DSLR for capturing video. It lacks in some of the high-end functionality of the bigger boys, but with the Canon brand behind it bringing years of experience, plus plenty of accessories and support, it should be an excellent choice for anyone wanting high-quality footage at a good price.

Price £1079.99/1199.00 **Web** www.canon.co.uk

FUJIFILM X-M1

The XM-1 is the latest addition to Fuji's retro styled advanced camera range



The XM-1 joins the ever growing line-up of high-spec designer cameras aimed at those who want a retro design and proven quality. It features a retro design in a compact-sized package, but is also more than just a pretty face. Inside the XM-1 you'll find a large 16.3-megapixel APS-C X-Trans CMOS sensor, which is the same as can be found in the X-Pro1, which itself has been shown to produce excellent quality in a range of applications. As well as a highend sensor, there is a zippy high-speed EXR Processor to help with start-up and recording times. Around the back of the XM-1, you'll find a 3-inch LCD, which can be tilted to aid in shooting from obscure angles. The XM-1 is capable of recording full HD video at 30 frames per second, which is what we've come to expect

from this style of camera. It's also possible to use a number of creative effects while recording, but this isn't something most will use.

VERDICT

With a proven sensor inside the XM-1. it's hard to see how it can be anything but a solid performer. However, it would also be hard to argue that the XM-1 is truly designed for a serious videographer. The full HD videos will undoubtedly be excellent, especially with the addition of some of Fujifilm's impressive lenses. But, there is an inherent lack of functionality, which will see the XM-1 being nothing more than a quick and simple shooter, rather than a serious filmmaking tool.

Price £679.99/\$799.95 **Web** www.fujifilm.com



NEW KIT REVIEWS

SONY PMW-300

A hugely expensive and extensive piece of kit, the PMW-300 is the latest professional video camera to arrive from the Sony stable

The Sony PMW-300 has recently been announced as a replacement for the popular PMW-EX3. It's designed to be an evolution of the original and therefore brings updates and improvements aplenty.

For starters, the PMW-300 is able to record 50Mbps HD material in MPEG HD422, meeting broadcast standards around the world. This high bit rate ensures smooth capture of fast moving objects, and the PMW-300 can even be upgraded in the future to support Sony's revolutionary XAVC codec system.

In addition, the PMW-300 also features the same EX-mount interchangeable lens system as the older EX3, making it compatible with a wide range of ½-inch and 2/3-inch lenses. At present, it comes equipped with a 14x zoom lens, but Sony has said a 16x zoom will be available in the future. The body of the PMW-300 is reminiscent of its predecessors, but there are some differences. Sony

has reportedly listened to customer feedback and introduced a semi-shoulder design that has a rotary hand grip, which should make it more comfortable over longer periods of time. Also based on customer feedback, the media on which the PMW-300 can record is the largest choice on the market, including SxS memory card, SD, Memory Stick and XQD.

VERDICT

The PMW-300 has more features than you can shake a stick at, and looks to build upon the success of the popular EX-range, which already has a devoted fan base who are all too keen to sing its praises. At the time of writing, Sony had yet to release an official launch price for the PMW-300. Nevertheless, for those looking for a professional video camera, the PMW-300 has an awful lot going for it.

Price TBA Web www.sony.co.uk





JVC JY-HMQ30

JVC's new 4K camera boasts a Nikon F mount

JVC has recently announced this new 4K interchangeable lens camera that takes Nikon F-mount lenses. The JY-HMQ30 houses a 1.25-type 8-megapixel CMOS sensor, and is capable of shooting 4K ultra videos at 24, 50 or 60 frames per second. Another key feature of this new camera is the quadruple SD card slots with SDXC support, which is sparking some controversy.

It essentially means you will need at least 4 SD cards to be able to record 4K, and many more if you want to keep shooting for extensive periods of time. There is also the extensive time needed to download all of this footage from 4 different sources when it comes to post production, along with the risk of one card becoming corrupt and spoiling the rest of the footage.

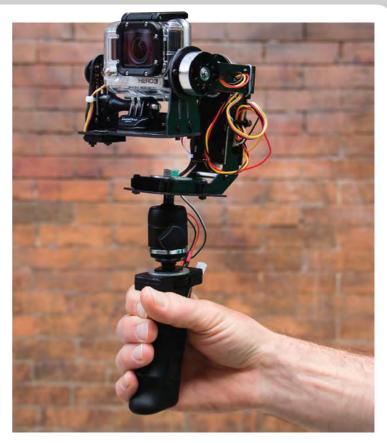
Moving beyond this, the JY-HMQ30 has 920k-dot 3.5-inch LCD and the popular F-mount, which will make high-quality lenses of all shapes and sizes available for every possible situation, although there looks to be no electronic controls built into the body on first inspection.

VERDICT

The JY-HMQ30 has some impressive features, and will undoubtedly produce fantastic videos. However, although there is yet to be an official price announcement, simple conversions from the Japanese offering puts the JY-HMQ30 at around £12,000 or \$18,000. If this proves to be true, JVC may have priced themselves out of contention in the current market place, offering a camera that perhaps doesn't stack up in the eyes of many videographers.

Price TBA
Web www.jvc.co.uk





STABILGO GYRO STABILISER

A very nifty electronic handheld stabiliser that's been tailored for GoPro cameras

Whether you like it or not, the GoPro-style of camera is here to stay. It's a revolutionary way to capture point of view and action footage, of that there is no doubt. Therefore, a lot of the footage from these cameras comes from being attached to a person or object. However, there are those who are taking advantage of the quality and simplicity of the GoPro, using it handheld to gain greater control while capturing footage.

The STABiLGO is billed as an affordable, motorised stabiliser, which is lightweight and consistently steady for active cinematography. It is essentially a small unit consisting of a handle, and mounting plate, for your GoPro along with some electronic trickery in the form of a high-speed processor and a state-of-the-art gyroscopic sensor. The STABiLGO actually

allows for 180-degrees of pitch movement along with 270-degrees of roll movement, to give you super-smooth shots in any scenario.

VERDICT

The STABiLGO definitely looks like an excellent idea, and is a fairly good solution for shaky footage scenarios. However, there have been a number of criticisms of early test footage taken using the STABiLGO, claiming it's shaky. There's no doubt that it is an improvement, and that this advanced technology could be the future for completely stable shots. Let's just hope the price for such kit starts to come down - the Kickstarter campaign was charging \$600 for the first production models.

Price TBA
Web www.stabilgo.com

ARRI ALEXA HD

Arri's new ALEXA HD trims the fat off its big brother to offer a more affordable package



Arri has recently announced what they are calling a more budget-friendly version of their ALEXA camera, a go-to camera for many professionals. The ALEXA HD shares a lot of the same features of its more expensive big brother, including the same 14-stop dynamic range, native ISO of 800, SXS card capture and C-log recording in 10-bit up to 120fps. It's able to offer these important features by including the same 2880x1620 sensor found in the standard ALEXA. But what's the catch? The only downfall seems to be the removal of the Arri Raw capabilities, although you will need to purchase some necessary upgrades to make the camera ready to shoot. Oh, and then there's the price.

The list price of the ALEXA HD comes in at \$30,000 (around £20,000). However, before you can use the camera, there are some necessary upgrades that need to be

purchased, including a ProRes Codec option, the Arri SxS Module and QuickTime file format option, bringing the total price to \$44,008 (around £29,000).

VERDICT

Simply browsing the Arri website will show you how widely used their cameras are, and the movies and TV shows that have been shot on them are enough of an advert for their obvious capabilities. The new ALEXA HD will. of course, produce some stunning footage, and, coming in at a much more affordable price compared to it's bigger brother, shows that top-level functionality is making its way down the ranks. Which, in turn, is gradually finding its way into more accessible cameras.

Price £20,000/\$30,000 (£29,000/\$44,008 with necessary upgrades)

Web www.arri.com



HAGUE MINI MOTION-CAM GO STABILISER FOR ACTION CAMERAS

This simple gimbal-style stabiliser for small action cameras is a highly practical kit

Hague has been in the camera support business for almost 20 years, so it's safe to say they know a thing or two about how this stuff works. Their latest offering is aimed at those of us who like to use our action cameras away from, well, the action. However, because of its simple set-up, it can also be used with small and lightweight cameras, up to 0.8kg.

The Hague Mini Motion
Cam Go Stabiliser follows
a popular and well-proven
design. Attached to the camera
mount is a curved body with
counterweights, much like we've
seen before. The key to this
stabiliser is the gimbal head
attached to the handle. This
allows you to move about freely,
without any of your movements
being transferred through the
system to your camera.
The attachment is a simple
1/4-inch screw, which can be

adjusted to move the camera forward or back. There are a variety of counterweights, which can be moved using the adjustable platform, allowing you to perfectly counterbalance the weight of your camera.

VERDICT

This gimbal design has a highly polished ball with a nylon socket, which Hague promises will ensure super-free movement, which in turn should translate into totally free movement for your action camera. With a sturdy aluminium and zinc construction, the Mini Motion-Cam Go Stabiliser should also stand the test of time, and its simple functionality will ensure that not much can possibly go wrong. It comes in a tried and tested design, at a price point that's very accessible indeed..

Price £74.40

Web haguecamerasupports.com



CANON EOS C100

The C100 is Canon's user-friendly professional production camera

The C100 from is a reasonably affordable video production camera, which according to Canon offers a unique combination of pro HD imaging, compact design and lens versatility.



Featuring an 8.3-megapixel Super 35mm CMOS sensor, boasting an ISO range of up to ISO 20,000 and being designed for use by a single person, the C100 is engineered to produce high-quality HD video in any situation. The lens mount on the unit is Canon's EF affair, giving access to a range of 4K cinema lenses, as well as over 60 EF optics from macro to fisheye, offering huge potential for extra versatility and accessibility.

In an attempt to make the C100 ideal for a single shooter, it comes with a number of automatic filming options, including One-Shot Auto Focus, Push Auto Iris and Auto White Balance. If you want to take control, full manual is available with a Focus Assist function to aid in hands-on focusing. Better still, these functions allow you to concentrate on capturing the footage, leaving the C100 to take care of the rest.

VERDICT

With every possible lens available to mount on the C100, and with a feature set suited to any project, it's hard to pick a fault in this professional production camera. Harsh critics will bash the 1080p quality, shouting about 4K video as being superior. But, for those looking to take control with a simple camera that's truly affordable for professional videographers, the C100 is an excellent choice.

Price £4,000/\$5,500
Web www.canon.co.uk





DEFY G5 GIMBAL

A 3-axis gimbal stabiliser that's capable of carrying a relatively large set-up with ease

The DEFY G5 is part of a new generation of kit that makes everyday filming easier. It is essentially a 3-axis handheld camera stabilising gimbal system, capable of handling camera and lens set-ups that weigh up to 5 non-metric pounds! That makes it suitable for some of the larger DSLR cameras and lens combinations out there.

The design of the G5 is scalable, meaning it can adapt to a wide range of cameras and lenses, and maintains a clean and simple design, much like the previous DEFY G2, incorporating wires within the frame for a sleek, simple look.

To aid in the super smooth footage, there is a vibration reduction plate that has been incorporated into the design. Put in place to assist with heavier set-ups, the vibration plate absorbs much of the naturally created shaking and vibration caused while moving around the scene. Meanwhile, round the back of the unit there are a number F switches that allow you to select between pan speeds and auto calibrate



to correct the balance set-up.

VERDICT

The DEFY G5 looks set to be an excellent piece of kit, combining simple looks with an impressive overall build quality. There are a number of optional accessories that can add to the functionality, and the ability to support a decent weight means you are able to mount a relatively large camera while maintaining a smooth and vibration-free shot. Saying that, for those looking to go bigger with their kit list, there is a new DEFY gimbal on the horizon that is capable of supporting twice as much weight.

Price \$3200 **Web** www.defygimbal.com

FHUGEN HONU GH3 VIDEO CAGE

A video cage designed specifically for use with the Panasonic GH3



The Panasonic GH range of cameras are quickly becoming the cult models for high-quality videos. The GH3 is the latest incarnation of the series and, as such, has a host of accessories and kit designed specifically for it.

Made by Fhugen, the Honu Cage is designed to wrap neatly around the camera without impeding on any of the buttons or ports. It fastens itself to the camera via the hotshoe and the tripod mount, which makes it very solid in use.

Importantly, all of the various functions of the GH3 are still usable with the cage attached, so it's still possible to access the memory card slot, the battery compartment, the various inputs and even extend and rotate the LCD screen

Around the Honu Cage you'll find three hotshoe dovetails, allowing accessories with a

similar mount to be easily attached to your set-up. There are also a copious amount of drilled holes for attaching a whole host of accessories to your cage.

VERDICT

The Honu Cage fits the GH3 perfectly, as you'd expect, and the all-metal black anodised body gives the impression that it will stand the test of time. For anyone who pushes the limits of their GH3 and attaches a huge number of accessories to their set-up, all while keeping kit size and weight to a minimum, the Honu Cage provides an excellent way to do so, without impeding the functionality of the camera.

Price £199.99 Web www.fhugen.com

GLIDECAM IGLIDE

A compact and effective gimbal stabiliser for small cameras

VERDICT

Price \$149

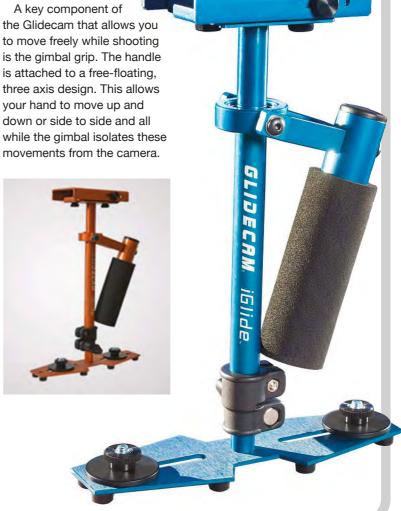
Web www.glidecam.com

The Glidecam iGlide is a pretty simple camera stabiliser, using a basic design to give you smooth shots while recording on the go and engineered for use with smaller cameras, generally weighing from 4 to 14 non-metric ounces! It's also small and lightweight enough to be held in one hand as you work. There are a number of adjustments that can be made to the unit to suit the camera you have mounted on top. The main shaft can be extended, and the counterweights tweaked, giving you more balanced weight, or simply shifting the balance further from your camera for the

perfect equilibrium. A key component of the Glidecam that allows you to move freely while shooting is the gimbal grip. The handle is attached to a free-floating, three axis design. This allows your hand to move up and down or side to side and all

The Glidecam iGlide is a very simple device, which can be set up how you like in a matter of seconds, without the need for extra tools. It's very compact and pretty lightweight, making it perfect for shooting on the go with a small camera and packing away for travel purposes. The gimbal system allows for seamless shooting, even with extensive movement and

keeps the camera still, even in the roughest of conditions.





LOUPE EX VIEW FINDER FOR PANASONIC GH3

A simple viewfinder that allows you to use your vari-angle LCD screen

Varavon has a small line of Loupe EX viewfinders designed for different cameras with swing-out-style LCD screens. These have previously been available for Panasonic GH series cameras, as well as Canon DSLRs, such as the 60D.

The latest product from Varavon is a dedicated Loupe EX viewfinder for the Panasonic GH3. This style of Loupe bracket allows you to take advantage of your articulating screen, rather than simply leaving it in the standard position. And that means you can shoot at awkward angles and still utilise a more superior view of your LCD display.

The Varavon calls upon a very simple design to attach to your LCD, utilising a basic strap that hooks round the back of the

screen and a tripod mounting plate. This not only makes it easy to attach, but ensures it doesn't affect the movement of the screen hinges.

VERDICT

A dedicated camera accessory will only ever be popular with regular users of that specific camera model. However, the GH range from Panasonic is very in-demand by videographers, and this Loupe is a therefore a highly useful accessory. Being able to call upon the vari-angle LCD, while getting the most out of your colour display through a viewfinder, makes the Varavon Loupe EX a vital accessory for GH3 owners.

Price £140.25/\$215.00 **Web** www.varavon.com



BLACKBIRD CAMERA STABILIZER SYSTEM

A gimbal-based design that features some great attention to detail

Following a relatively common design principle, the Blackbird is a essentially a curved arm attached to your camera and some counterweights. However, when you look at it in more detail, you'll see that there is a camera-mounting plate, along with a friction pad that allows for adjustments of the camera position. The chassis features a scale to reference the position of the plate, so that re-balancing time is quick and easy when attaching your camera set-up, aided by builtin spirit levels. At the other end of the Blackbird is the counterweight bar, which can be adjusted to suit your shooting style. The weights themselves interlock together, to remove the possibility of them shifting during filming, adding unwanted





noise to your shot.

Although the Blackbird can hold up to 8 non-metric pounds in weight, the gimbal assembly, with its 6 precision ball-bearings, can take a minimum static load of 57 pounds in any axis. The main operator functions give you roll, tilt and pan control, whereas the second ring below the gimbal works only the pan movement.

VERDICT

On the face of it, the Blackbird stabiliser follows a very conventional design, utilising a gimbal head and a counterweighted structure. Behind that though, there are some little features that make this stand out from the crowd. and these details show that the smaller issues of other rival models have been banished. The Smooth Touch technology, for example, controls the friction to lessen roll and tilt motion artefacts, as well as reducing the initial stabiliser motions from acceleration, thereby avoiding the unwanted pendulum effect.

Price \$675
Web www.camotionllc.com

READY RIG

A uniquely-designed backpack-style rig for the ultimate in camera stability

The Ready Rig is a camera stabiliser designed to be used with any style of camera, from a DSLR all the way to a large set-up such, as a RED Epic with all the accessories. It has a maximum load capacity of around 17 non-metric pounds, and is designed to give the user complete freedom of movement, stability and comfort with its four-point stabilisation.

The Ready Rig features a fairly unique design, utilising a fullbody support with two shoulder mounts attached to two rods, both of which are positioned in two separate locations. The stabilisation comes from the spring-loaded back support, which offers that four-point stabilisation plus those fully adjustable mounting rods. This design ensures the ultimate in camera stabilisation for a number of shooting positions. With the full back support, the Ready Rig can also be completely hands-free, allowing you to keep in control of your focus and zoom, or simply to adjust camera settings.



VERDICT

The Ready Rig is a very large piece of kit, offering absolute support and control for your camera gear. Its backpack-style design will ensure that you're comfortable after long hours of shooting because it spreads the load around your shoulders and waist. Being fully adjustable, it's possible to set up the Ready Rig to shoot at even the most awkward of angles. Being able to support a large weight also makes it ideal for absolutely all shooting situations..

Price \$1899

Web www.albacamerasupport.com



SIRUI P-324X MONOPOD

A professional monopod with three folding feet for extra stability

The new Sirui P-324X has three fold down feet that provides extra support and stability, while still maintaining the size and ergonomics of a more traditional monopod. These feet will allow you to leave the monopod free standing, as long as you don't put anything too heavy on top. At the same time, they can also be used to stand on, giving your set-up complete stability when shooting from a static location.

your camera. Nevertheless, as most of us know, these can be fairly cumbersome when you need to move, not to mention being large and heavy to keep with you. The P-324X from Sirui looks to combine the stability of a tripod and the convenience of a monopod, all while keeping the product firmly aimed at the videography market thanks to the adjustable ball head.

Price £274.95 **Web** www.sirui-photo.us



At the base of the P-324X is a ball head that enables you to rotate the monopod 360-degrees, free of the folded down feet, as well as tilt it by 15-degrees in each direction. This makes it easy to follow your subject or adjust your viewing angle without disturbing the stability of your monopod.

To make this feature even more useful, Sirui has made the ball head tension adjustable using a simple Allen bolt, in turn allowing you to customise the fluidity of the monopod movement.

VERDICT

A traditional tripod will always be the best way to full stabilise



EDELKRONE MONITOR HOLDER

A versatile product that allows you to attach an external monitor to your camera

Edelkrone has introduced a number of innovative products that look to push the boundaries for both amateur and professional videographers. Their latest product is a very simple, but highly useful tool. The Monitor Holder is designed as a simple solution to mounting an external LCD Monitor or an electronic viewfinder to your set-up. It attaches to your camera via the hotshoe, meaning you don't need a modular rig to support an external device.

The Monitor Holder simply tightens onto your hotshoe, ensuring it is securely in place. You can then use just one hand to adjust the angle of the external monitor or EVF, allowing you to place it exactly where you want it, even while

filming. To ensure you have every available option, the Monitor Holder is symmetrical in design, meaning it can be mounted on the left or right-hand side of the camera. This is particularly useful when working with an EVF, meaning you can position it in a place that is comfortable and convenient.

VERDICT

A very simple device, but also a very useful one, the Monitor/EVF Holder is an excellent concept brought to life in an elegant solution. It is wonderfully simple and easily adjustable to suit any situation. It can also hold monitors up to 9-inches with some room to spare, and is fully compatible with all EVFs. An added bonus is that it's possible to adjust the counterforce level of the device, meaning you can work with any monitor or EVF, regardless of the weight.

Price \$169.99
Web www.edelkrone.com



F&V K4000 STUDIO PANEL

A studio-style LED panel light designed to be used on location

F&V has recently introduced their new K4000 LED light, billing it as a portable solution, and selling it as 'studio lighting, not just for the studio'. With this product F&V are therefore trying to bring the quality of a dedicated studio light into a portable setup that can be taken and used everywhere.

The new K4000 is available in both daylight and bi-colour models, and sports 400 pure colour power LEDs. F&V put all of their LEDs through multiple tests and evaluations before placing them into a unit too it seems. This ensures that they all have a perfect colour balance and matching diode, which in turn provides an absolute pure colour consistency between the LEDs and a clean daylight calibrated colour of 5600 Kelvin.

The light itself produces

a wide 60-degrees of illumination, making it ideal as a fill light. It's also very simple to use, utilising a simple method of adjusting the angle of light, as well as offering a practical dimming function.

VERDICT

Available in a number of options, and coming equipped with a milk diffusion filter plus the option of using batteries to power the unit, there is a K4000 light suited to everyone. It isn't the cheapest portable light solution available, although it can be had as part of a set for a little less. Nevertheless, it delivers a very simple lighting solution that promises a clean and true colour throughout all 400 LEDs on the panel.

Price \$415 **Web** www.fvlighting.com



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The team singles out current and forthcoming indie movies plus documentaries that are creating a buzz!

Byzantium

Two lost women find refuge at a deserted old guesthouse where they meet two men. When Eleanor, the younger of the two, befriends



one of their hosts. she tells them of their horrific secret; they are 200-years-old and survive on human blood.

> Neil Jordan Director **UK Release** May 2013 Language English 118 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

The Battery

A pair of ex-baseball players try to survive a zombie apocalypse by travelling across the American wilderness. Their relationship is



tested when things get desperate. Not your average indie zombie flick, this is beautifully shot with witty dialogue.

Directors Jeremy Gardner **UK Release** 2013 English Language Duration 101 minutes **UK Certification**

As Cool As I Am

A coming-of-age story, which follows small town teenage girl Lucy. As she turns sixteen she dumps her tomboy image, tunes into



her sexuality, and duly clashes with her parents in the process. An adaptation from a novel of the same name.

Max Mayer Director **UK Release** TBC Language English Duration 118 minutes **UK Certification** TRC

The History of Future Folk

Two aliens from the planet Hondo arrive on earth with the intention of ruling the planet,



but their mission is abandoned when they discover the human invention of 'music'.

Jeremy Kipp Walker **UK Release** 2013 Language English 86 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Paradise: Love

The first in a trilogy by Ulrich Seidl. Teresa, a 50-year-old mother from Austria, travels to Kenya in search of love, only to be faced with



disappointment. She must learn that, on the beaches of Kenya, love is merely a business.

Ulrich Seidl Director **UK Release** 2013 Language German, English, Swahili 120 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Aftershock

A group of tourists find themselves trapped in a Chilean underground nightclub after a massive earthquake hits the city. Whilst fighting for their



lives, the group discover they are not alone when crazed inmates escape from a nearby asylum. Stars Eli Roth.

Director Nicolás López **UK Release** Language English/Spanish **Duration** 89 **UK Certification**

Would You Rather

A woman needs to help her brother who has a life-threatening disease. Out of desperation, she unwittingly agrees to compete in a deadly



game hosted by a sadistic millionaire in the hope that she will be granted treatment for her sick sibling.

Director David Guy Levy May 2013 UK Release Language English Duration 93 minutes **UK Certification**

Bass Ackwards

After a disastrous affair with a married woman ends and his relationship with his roommate goes sour, Linas finds himself on the road. A



comedic cross-country adventure in a modified WW van (known as 'Shorty') ensues in this dramatic comedy.

Director Linas Phillips **UK Release** TBC English Language Duration 103 minutes **UK Certification** TBC

No

An advertising executive with limited resources comes up with an unprecedented campaign to defeat Augusto Pinochet, while under



the watchful eye of government henchmen. He plans to free Chile from oppression in the 1988 referendum.

Directors Pablo Larraín Feb 2013 **UK Release** Language Spanish 118 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Paradise: Faith

The second in a trilogy by Ulrich Seidl. Anna Maria, an abstinent middle-aged Austrian woman fights the ever increasing desire for



sexual fulfilment, whilst also preaching her strong Christian beliefs to the estranged people in her village.

Ulrich Seidl Director **UK Release** 2013 Language German, Arabic Duration 115 minutes **UK Certification**

Chasing Ice

A documentary about National Geographic photographer James Balog as he travels the Arctic and sets up time-lapse cameras



designed to capture the ever changing face of the glaciers, and to expose how their demise is really affecting our world.

Directors Jeff Orlowski **UK Release** 2012 English Language **Duration** 75 minutes **UK Certification**

V/H/S 2

Following a very similar anthology format to the first V/H/S, a private investigator breaks into a house in search of a missing student.



But, what he finds is a pile of old VHS tapes, each one hiding a tale of terror and a clue to the student's whereabouts.

Directors Various UK Release 2013 Language English 96 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Benny Loves Killing

A London filmmaker tries to complete a horror film, but becomes obsessed with her dream. Soon she takes on many unusual



characteristics as she gradually realises, and comes to terms with, the real horrors within her own personal life.

Director Ben Woodiwiss Released **English** Language 100 minutes Duration **UK Certification** TBA

Computer Chess

Set in the 1980's, back when the notion of a machine capable of artificial intelligence was a relatively new one. Over the course of a weekend



this film follows software programmers in their task to create a machine capable of beating a human at chess.

Director Andrew Bujalski **UK Release** TBC English Language 92 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Stories We Tell

This film documents the filmmaker's family and the stories they have told over the years. Through a series of honest and sometimes



quite uncomfortable interviews, the director, and main subject of the film, tries to decipher lies and myth from reality.

Director Sarah Polley **UK Release** 2012 Language English 108 minutes Duration **UK Certification** 12A

Touchy Feely

A professional masseuse is suddenly unable to carry out her everyday job when she finds herself strangely repelled by human contact.



Her dentist brother, on the other hand, finds new healing powers when his dental business begins to fail.

Director Lynn Shelton **UK Release** Jan 2013 English Language Duration 90 minutes **UK Certification**

Come Out and Play

An couple who are expecting a child take a trip to an idyllic island - their last trip together before they become parents. However, it's not



long before they realise that there are no other adults around. Their holiday soon becomes a living nightmare.

Director Makinov **UK Release** TBC Language English 105 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

The Canyons

Youth, glamour and surveillance meet in this dark, erotic thriller, which has divided opinion. Some expect a classic, while others say the



performances are stilted. The amateurish teaser trailers don't help things either, but it's still rather tempting.

Directors Paul Schrader **UK Release** 2013 Language English **Duration** 100 minutes **UK Certification**

Song For Marion

Arthur, an old man whose wife has recently passed away, decides to join the eccentric local choir, which she used to attend. This



helps him to rebuild his relationship with his son in an emotional journey of self-discovery.

Paul Andrew Director Williams Feb 2013 **UK Release** English Language **Duration** 93 minutes **UK Certification**

A Band Called Death

Before punk became popular there was a band called Death, who emerged during the popularity of soul and disco. Record companies were



initimidated by the new sound, and they split before finishing one album. This is their story.

Directors Mark C. Covino and Jeff Howlett TBC **UK Release**

Language English Duration 96 minutes **UK Certification** TBC

Robot & Frank

An aged ex-thief, now living with his wealthy son, receives an unexpected gift from him - a robot butler to help him around the house.



However, the old man and his new sidekick are soon planning to pull off a daring jewellery heist together.

Director Jake Schreier **UK Release** 2013 Language English Duration 89 minutes **UK Certification**

Leonie

Originally released in Japan in 2010, Leonie finally sees a US and UK release in 2013. This film covers the life of the early 20th Century



American teacher and journalist Leonie Gilmour, the mother of artist and architect Isamu Noguchi.

Director Hisako Matsui **UK Release** 2013 English Language 102 minutes Duration UK Certification PG-13

Safety Not Guaranteed

Three journalists set out to find and interview a man who placed a personals ad looking for



someone to time travel with. They eventually meet Kenneth, the man who believes he has built a time-machine.

Director Colin Trevorrow **UK Release** Language English 86 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Kon-Tiki

A tale of survival on the ocean. This true story follows a seven-man crew 4,000 miles across the Pacific on a raft in 1947. Their aim was to

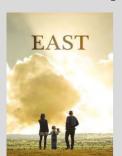


prove it was possible for South Americans to have settled in Polynesia in the pre-Columbian age.

Director Joachim Rønning & Espen Sandberg **UK Release** 2013 Language Norwegian Duration 118 minutes **UK Certification**

East

After their parents are killed, Elva and Sammy embark on a long eastward journey in search of a better life. But things soon turn sour, and they



find themselves in need of help. Completed in 2011, the film won Best Feature Film at the UK Film Festival.

Director Leonora Moore Release TBC Language English **Duration** 86 minutes **UK Certification** TRC

Modest Reception

Shown at the 2012 Edinburgh Film Festival, this is a tale of an eccentric couple who drive around mountainous regions of Iran handing



out large amounts of money to village folk in return for odd requests. Also known by its Iranian title Paziraie Sadeh.

Director Mani Haghighi **UK Release** 2013 Language Persian 100 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Lore

This film begins at the end of World War II and Lore's father has just returned from a lost war. As American troops sweep across Germany



and her parents prepare to move the family away, Lore begins to question her parents once respected political views.

Director Cate Shortland **UK Release** Language English/German 109 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

Liberal Arts

A new rom-com from How I Met Your Mother actor Josh Radnor, who also stars here, in only his second film. A 35-year-old man returns to



his old college to attend a professor's retirement party, where he meets and falls for a 19-yearold-student.

Josh Radnor Director **UK Release** 2012 Language English Duration 97 minutes **UK Certification**

Ghosts With Shit Jobs

Set in 2040, following the collapse of the entire western world, people in China watch a reality TV show, which documents the poor western souls



as they struggle to make ends meet with bizarre jobs, such as selling spider silk and attempting subtle product placement.

Directors Various **UK Release** 2013 English Language Duration 94 minutes **UK Certification** TRC

Not Fade Away

From Sopranos director David Chase, comes a memorable story from the east coast of America during the 1960's. It's an engaging

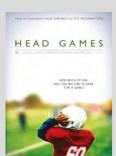


'rise to stardom' tale of a struggling band, their ever-changing line-up and the lead singers romance.

Director David Chase **UK Release** 2013 English Language Duration 112 minutes **UK Certification** TRC

Head Games

Head Games is a documentary that follows Chris Nowinski, an American football player and wrestler, as he tirelessly tries to uncover



the truth about the permanent dangers and consequences of head injuries in all kinds of sporting activities.

Director Steve James **UK Release TBC** Language English Duration 95 minutes **UK Certification** TBC

Attenberg

This Greek comedy tells the story of Marina, a socially alienated 23-year-old factory worker. Stuck in her boring routine, and at the mercy of



her sick father, she has an increasing dislike for all other people. Except her only friend, Bella.

Athina Rachel Director Tsangari **UK Release** 2011 Language Greek, French Duration 97 minutes **UK Certification** TBC

Reality

Luciano is a fishmonger who loves to perform, and never misses an opportunity to grab the spotlight. One day, his friends and family



persuade him to audition for Big Brother. This decision leads him into a fascinating world of obsession and paranoia.

Director Matteo Garrone **UK Release** March 2013 Language **English** 116 minutes Duration **UK Certification** 15

Releases by ing filmmakers that passed you by Releases by inspirational filmmakers that may have

Garage

Set in rural Ireland, this is the tale of Josie, a middle-aged garage worker who is in search of intimacy and life fulfilment, but unknowingly



gets himself into trouble with the law. A truly tragic film about isolation.

Director	Lenny Abrahamson
Year	2007
Language	English
Duration	85 minutes
UK Certifica	ation 18

Treeless Mountain

A study in childhood resilience, set in Seoul, Korea, in which two sisters must look after one another when their mother leaves them with



their intollerant, slave-driving aunt to go in search of their estranged father.

Director	So Yong Kim
Year	2008
Language	Korear
Duration	89 minutes
UK Certification	PC

Noroi: The Curse

This frightening tale follows a documentary maker in his journey across a Japanese town, searching for the truth behind an urban legend



of a demon. An epic story that breaks the genre mold and is often genuinely scary.

Director	Kôji Shiraishi
⁄ear	2005
_anguage	Japanese
Duration	115 minutes
JK Certification	NA

A Room for **Romeo Brass**

Two young friends, Romeo and Gavin, have their friendship tested when an exciting, but



dangerous, stranger comes between them, and ultimately threatens their families.

Director	Shane Meadows
Year	1999
Language	English
Duration	90 minutes
UK Certification	on 15

Cold Souls

A disillusioned actor loses sight of his dreams and puts his soul into storage, but realises that without a soul other aspects of his life begin to



fail, including his marriage. He then rents the soul of a poet to try to improve his life.

Director	Sophie Barthes
Year	2009
Language	English
Duration	101 minutes
LIK Certification	n 12Δ

A Serious Man

From the celebrated Coen Brothers comes the story of college professor Larry Gopnik. Our main character is a man trying to make sense



of his chaotic life, amidst a failing marriage, thieving children and mounting debt.

Director	Joel and Ethan Coen
Year	2009
Language	English
Duration	106 minutes
UK Certific	ation 15

Risen

This is the fascinating story of welsh featherweight boxer Howard Winstone and his rise to fame after winning of the world

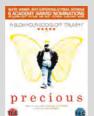


championship and securing his place in the history books as a celtic legend.

Director	Neil Jones
UK Released	2010
Language	English
Duration	121 minutes
LIK Cortification	15

Precious

An extremely dark and emotional film that tracks the life of a pregnant teenager in New York. Tensions mount as she tries to make a



better life for herself, despite the physical and mental trauma she has suffered.

Director	Lee Daniels
Year	2010
Language	English
Duration	110 minutes
UK Certification	15

The Great Ecstasy of **Robert Carmichael**

A disturbing film, and certainly not for the fainthearted. Set in a small English town, three boys

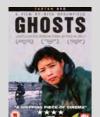


get involved in a new world of drugs, temptation and violence. Stars Danny Dyer.

Director Thomas Clav Year 2005 Language English Duration 96 minutes **UK Certification** 18

Ghosts

Master documentary maker Nick Broomfield tells the story of a young Chinese girl who is smuggled into the UK so she can support her



family back home. Inspired by the Morecambe Bay tragedy of 2004.

Nick Broomfield Director Year 2007 Language English 96 minutes Duration **UK Certification** 15

Grizzly Man

A fascinating but sad documentary from legendary filmmaker Werner Herzog. This is the tale of an eccentric grizzly bear activist who



was killed in October of 2003 whilst living amongst the feared wild animals in Alaska.

Werner Herzog Director 2005 Year English Language Duration 103 minutes **UK Certification** 15

Adam & Paul

This comedy follows two vulnerable drug addicts during one day, as they wander the streets of Dublin looking for their next score. In



the grip of drug addiction, the friends are oddly optimistic about life and the future.

Director Lenny Abrahamson Year 2004 Language English 83 minutes Duration **UK Certification**

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